the weekly Standard

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GOING DUTCH?
STANLEY KURTZ

The Michael Moore Conservatives

Britain's anti-American Tories
by ADRIAN WOOLDRIDGE

PLUS! Michael Moore and Me
by FRED BARNES

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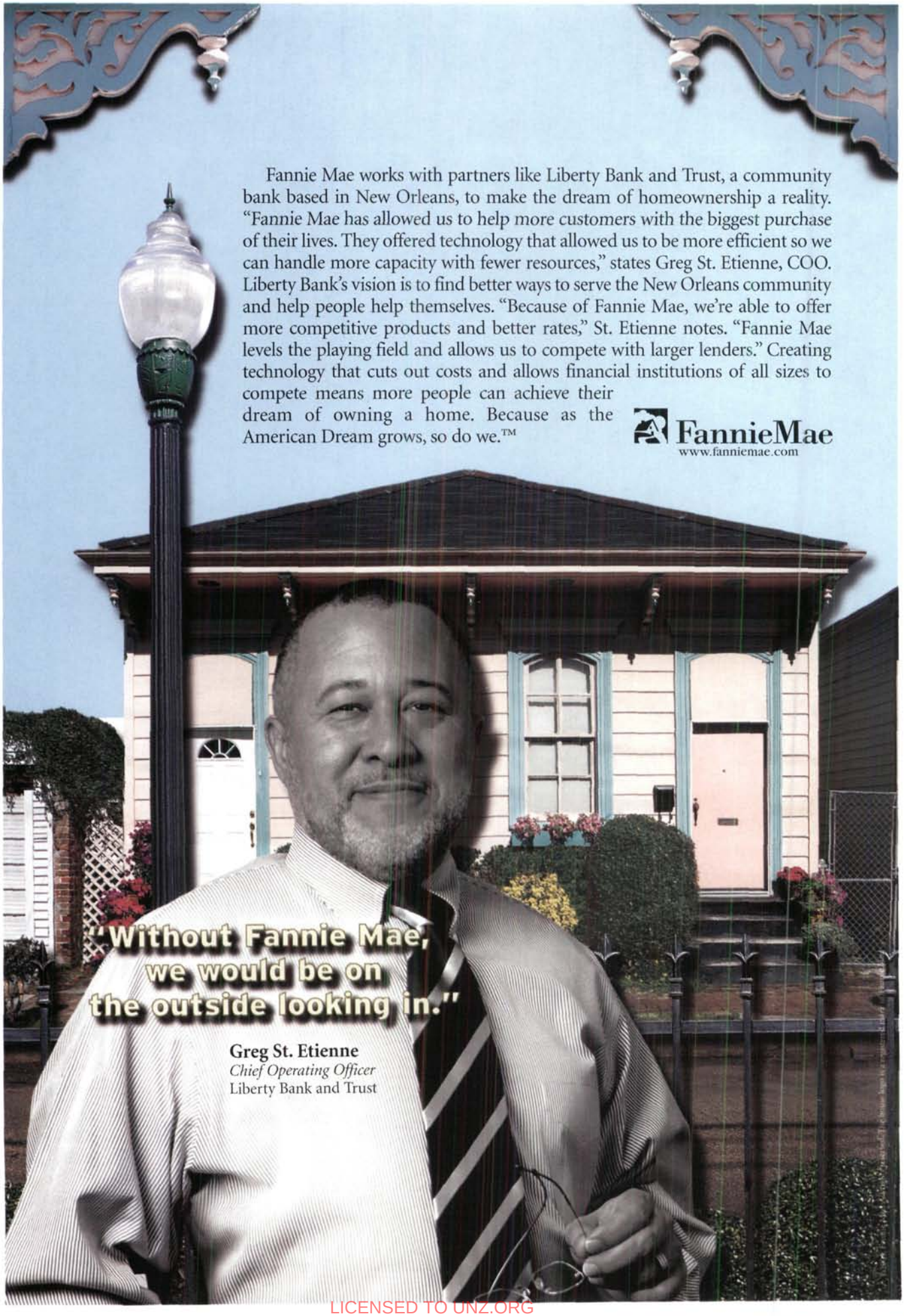

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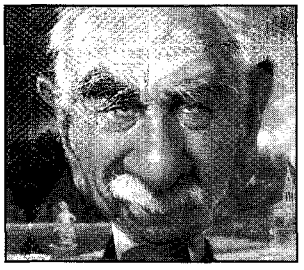

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Some of His Best Friends

Sen. Ernest "Fritz" Hollings recently published a guest column in the *Charleston Post and Courier* in which he complained that the true purpose of President Bush's Iraq policy was to "secure Israel" and "take the Jewish vote from the Democrats." Various people are rather upset with Hollings as a consequence; Anti-Defamation League national director Abraham H. Foxman says the senator's op-ed argument is "reminiscent of age-old, anti-Semitic canards about a Jewish conspiracy to control and manipulate the government." But Sen. Hollings angrily rejects any suggestion that he is anti-Semitic—and, in fact, he himself is now demanding an apology from those who've made that suggestion most forcefully.

You know all this already, of course; it has been widely reported in the media. But THE SCRAPBOOK will say it straight out: The media have not treated Sen. Ernest "Fritz" Hollings of South Carolina fairly, here.

Genuinely fair coverage of the controversy would have gone into much greater detail about exactly how anti-Semitic Sen. Hollings's arguments truly are.

For instance: Consider the extended—and extraordinary—defense of himself Hollings made on the Senate floor last Thursday. In the course of which he (a) groused that "you cannot have an Israel policy other than what AIPAC gives you around here"; (b) insisted on the "legitimacy" of his notorious reference to the late Howard Metzenbaum as the "senator from B'nai B'rith"; and (c) revealed that just "the other day" he'd asked his staffers how they supposed they'd react were the Israeli army to bulldoze their families' homes. "Wouldn't you want to cut their throat?" Hollings said he asked his aides. And "They said: 'In a New York minute.'"

When Sen. Hollings retires home to South Carolina at the end of this year, we hope he takes his staff along. ♦

It's All in the Punctuation

Front page headline, the Washington Post, *Tuesday, May 18*

Gay Couples Marry in Massachusetts

Front page headline, the Washington Times, *same story, same day*

Homosexuals 'marry' in Massachusetts

Impeach Michael Moore

Not long ago, "documentary" filmmaker Michael Moore was all over the place complaining about how his new movie *Fahrenheit 9/11*—which has something to do with a secret, years-long partnership between the Bush and bin Laden families—was being "censored." Megabuck Democratic party donors Bob and Harvey Weinstein, the Miramax Films executives, had produced Moore's movie, see. But Miramax itself is owned by the evil Disney corporation, and evil Disney's evil chairman, Michael Eisner, was supposed to have prohibited the Weinsteins from distributing *Fahrenheit 9/11* to retail theaters.

Of course, it soon enough wound up that none of this was actually true. But so what? What is truth when you're Michael Moore and you're trying to drum up publicity with a persecution fantasy? Truth is not important. What's important is that you have a Plan B.

And last week Plan B was revealed: Miramax Films has hired all those people who invented a "vast right-wing conspiracy" against Bill and Hillary Clinton—so that they can invent a similar such conspiracy targeted against Michael Moore. Already on board: former Clinton/Gore spinner robots Howard Wolfson, Joe Lockhart, Mark Fabiani, Carter Eskew, Michael Feldman, and Chris Lehane. The *Washington Post* reports that Miramax is taking this step in preparation for an expected barrage of "Republican attacks" on Moore's film.

We take this to mean the movie's a loser: Miramax has given up marketing

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it to a general audience and is hoping only to generate left-leaning "solidarity" box office sales. THE SCRAPBOOK promises not to help. We'll have nothing more to say about it. ♦

Air America Shows Its Thong

Monica showed hers for free, of course, but Air America is fighting bankruptcy, so the new Al Franken-headlined liberal talk-radio network has taken to selling—among a wide variety of similarly ridiculous knick-knacks—a special-edition "classic thong" bikini bottom. Now, for only $15.99, you too can cover your privates with Air America's corporate logo. Va-va-va-vooom!

Okay, maybe that's not your style. But what else can Franken & Co. do to raise money? An ordinary radio start-up would try to sell advertising, but it seems Air America hasn't got much that major corporate sponsors want to buy. New York *Daily News* columnist Michael Goodwin reports that a day he recently spent listening to Air America was like "ten hours of rancid venom." At one point, for example, Randi Rhodes, who follows Franken in the lineup, compared President Bush to the character "Fredo" in the *Godfather*: "Somebody ought to take him out fishing and *phuw*," she said, imitating the sound of gunfire. Goodwin was amazed—all the more so because at another point during his "day of torture," he also heard a commercial spot from General Motors. So he called up GM's marketing communications director, Ryndee Carney, and asked her what was up. The station had simply screwed up, Carney explained. "GM will not advertise on any Air America affiliates" *period*.

In other news: Remember those laid-off Air America staffers in Chicago and Los Angeles we told you about last week? Turns out they'd all been paying into a health care plan that didn't exist—and that none of them has received his final two-week paycheck. ♦

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Casual

Comic Relief

Like most boys, I was a comics fan. Everyone has favorite superheroes, and mine were garden-variety: Batman, the Flash, Superman.

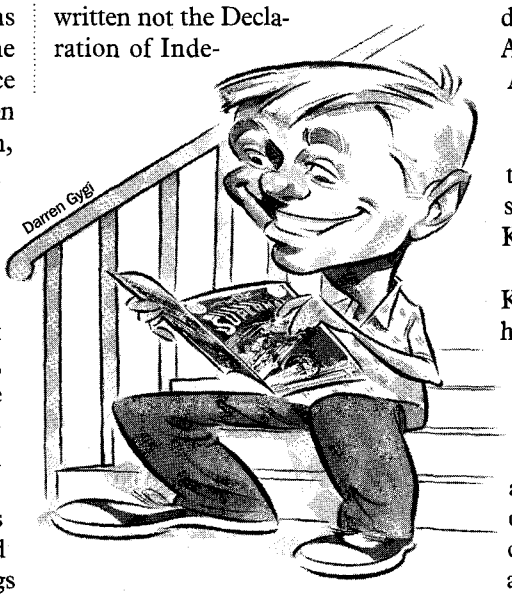
I wasn't a sophisticated reader. I didn't go in for the civil rights allegories (like *X-Men*), and I wasn't much interested in seeing my heroes tackle social issues in the manner of the Green Arrow. I was happiest when they were going after super-villains bent on world domination. I was the type of kid who loved the Justice League of America—until 1984, when they kicked out Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, the Green Lantern, and Hawkman and replaced them with a 14-year-old Gypsy girl, an African-American model, and a break-dancing Latino gang-banger. Only 10 years old at the time, I didn't know what political correctness was, but I knew that I wanted my Justice League fighting Lex Luthor, not settling gang disputes in Detroit and unseating corrupt African dictators.

Nonetheless, I was into comics pretty deep, with a couple thousand issues safeguarded in little plastic bags with acid-free cardboard backing. The last vestige of my collecting days is a clock made from the cover of *Teen Titans* #36, which hangs in my office. You should see the looks I get from management.

A few weeks ago I came across a comic book called *9-11 September 11th 2001: The World's Finest Comic Book Writers and Artists Tell Stories to Remember*. It's a collection of 74 short comics put out after September 11 by publishing giant DC Comics.

Some of the entries are merely dopey, jazz-age one-worldism. In a strip set in the year 3258, a mother visiting the 9/11 memorial in New York with her child explains, "After the attack, the world changed. People realized that the old ways of country against country and culture against culture could no longer apply. They accomplished what governments never could—they *united* the world."

Mind you, the 9/11 hijackers believed in a "united" world. Yet to many of the comics writers, unity is an end in itself. An entry from comic legend Marv Wolfman ends with a piece of parchment, on which is written not the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution, but the preamble to the U.N. charter.



In another strip, titled "Spirit," the ghosts of Winston Churchill, Martin Luther King, Shaka Zulu, Abraham Lincoln, Mahatma Gandhi, and Golda Meir gather in a conference room to debate the morality of war. They are brought to agreement by a nugget of wisdom from the Koran.

Other entries explore the root causes of terrorism. "We spread the gasoline, they dropped the match," says one wizened character. (DC wasn't the only comic-book publisher to address the terrorist attacks. Marvel's *Amazing Spider-Man* devoted one of its first post-9/11 issues to the subject. In it, Spider-Man asks, "What *do* we tell the children? . . . Perhaps we tell them that we are sorry. . . . That our eagerness to shout is not the equal of our willingness to listen. That the burdens of distant people are the responsibility of all men and women of conscience, or their burdens will one day become our tragedy.")

Still other items in the anthology ignore the terrorists and focus on the shortcomings of Americans. "A Burning Hate" makes an object lesson of kids on a playground who pick a fight with their Pakistani playmates, whom they blame for 9/11.

Worse is Dwayne McDuffie's entry, "Static Shock," where a group of multicultural youths are eating lunch at a diner run by a Muslim named Mr. Akkad. White hooligans waving an American flag and chanting "U-S-A" burst in and demolish the restaurant. One pulls a gun and tries to kill the kindly Mr. Akkad. A bystander says, "Great. Pearl Harbor yesterday, Kristallnacht today."

Of course there was no American Kristallnacht. Islamic interest groups have peddled the notion of surging hate crimes, but in the 32 months since 9/11, the Department of Justice has received only 560 reports of backlash crimes, leading to 138 state and federal prosecutions. Of these, only a tiny percentage were violent crimes. Deplorable, every one. But in a nation of 260 million people? Not bad.

Parts of *September 11th 2001* were a little less dreary. Sam Glanzman's story worried that America would wait to confront the terrorist evil until it was too late. Michael Moorcock wrote about 1940s England. Both Glanzman and Moorcock saw World War II up close—Glanzman in the U.S. Navy and Moorcock as a young boy with a worm's-eye view of the blitz.

In those days the industry's patriotism produced jingoistic comics with titles like "The Terror of the Slimy Japs" and "The Slant Eye of Satan." I suppose today's comics are progress, of a sort.

Jonathan V. Last

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NATIONAL WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL DEDICATION · MAY 29, 2004

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Troop Dreams

In "A Few More Good Men" (May 3), Frederick W. Kagan argues that "a wise strategy" is to dispatch about 40,000 more American troops to Iraq. But would this not merely provide more targets for murderous Sunni suicide bombers?

In this former U.S. naval officer's opinion, a much better strategy is to turn over all direct patrolling and policing in Iraq, before June 30, to the Iraqi forces of the independent Iraqi government we create there. The latter speak Arabic, know the terrain and the people very well, and are far more suited for the job. The United States would restrict its military interference in Iraqi affairs to massive displays of airpower.

Then we can influence Iraq indirectly. Concentrating on powerful, visible displays of airpower would also send a clear signal to the corrupt Syrian and Iranian dictatorships. President Bush may even be able to "persuade" Syria to withdraw all Syrian soldiers from the nation of Lebanon.

Howard Greyber
San Jose, CA

Frederick W. Kagan responds: Howard Greyber voices a recommendation that has become common in recent days: Hand the problem over to the Iraqis. But this has been the policy of the Bush administration all along.

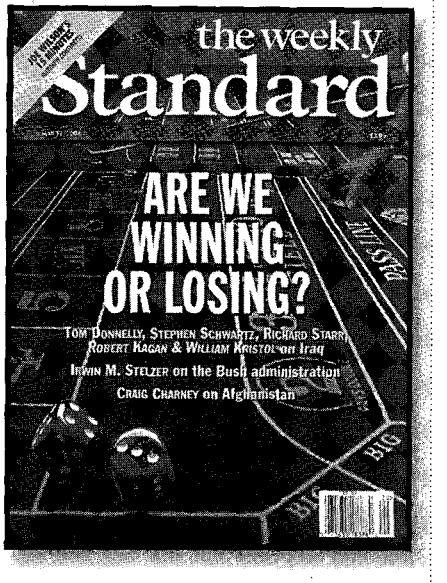
The administration always intended to turn both security and counterinsurgency over to Iraqi forces as rapidly as possible. In fact, it wildly overestimated its ability to do so rapidly, which is one of the major reasons for the current crisis and the current increase in American casualties.

The fact is that it takes time to train new recruits even in basic policing skills, let alone in the complex skills required to conduct a counterinsurgency. We rushed ill-prepared Iraqi units into the fray too soon, and the results have been disastrous.

American forces must stay in Iraq long enough to allow the Iraqis to field competent and trained soldiers who can face down the insurgents, and we will probably have to do a lot of the heavy-lifting in the counterinsurgency as well.

The notion that American airpower will somehow solve this problem has been another tenet of the Rumsfeld approach to war and counterinsurgency, and it is failing dismally both in Iraq and Afghanistan. Airplanes will not keep Iraqi police trainees and their families safe from insurgent attacks. Airplanes cannot hunt down Moktada al-Sadr's rebel army with great discrimination, separating it from noncombatants, as the 1st Armored Division is now doing. Airplanes cannot prepare Iraq for sovereignty or make it stable.

The Bush administration has been implementing suggestions like Mr. Greyber's, to the extent that they are at all possible, for the past year. That is why we are in so much trouble today.



Bad Publicity

Fred Barnes's "Precarious Rumsfeld" (May 17) is about much more than the various scenarios that could lead to Donald Rumsfeld's resignation. In fact, Barnes's piece highlights yet another example of how the Bush administration has lost control of this year's election agenda.

After weeks of bad publicity on Iraq, the administration got some good news recently that should be center stage in campaign coverage: confirmation of a genuine economic boom. The Labor Department's April payroll survey numbers and revisions to previous monthly numbers confirm that we now have a Main Street (as opposed to Wall Street) recovery. But that news was overshadowed by the scandal at Abu Ghraib.

Yet, as troubling as that scandal is, it is almost inconceivable that the presidential election will be influenced by it. Barring some unlikely revelation that the administration itself ordered the conduct, the election ought to be about bigger questions, like whether the Bush administration was right to go to war and whether its economic policies are working. That's why the administration needs to move decisively not just to deal with the scandal, but also to better explain the reasons behind the Iraq war and progress on the economic front. On Iraq, The Weekly Standard has repeatedly argued the case for Operation Iraqi Freedom far better than the administration. On the economy, it seems no one trumpets the new boom.

But the Labor Department's jobs data for 2004 make it clear that one can plausibly claim that it's "morning in America" again. And the economic story should matter on Election Day just as much as Iraq—provided people are made aware of the administration's economic success. Otherwise John Kerry, the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and others will make sure the poster children for President Bush's reelection effort are Herbert Hoover, Richard Clarke, and Lynndie England.

John Sepehri
Dallas, TX

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About Those Iraqi Weapons . . .

"A year after the war began, Americans are questioning why the administration went to war in Iraq when Iraq was not an imminent threat, when it had no nuclear weapons, no persuasive links to al Qaeda, no connection to the terrorist attacks of September 11, and no stockpiles of chemical or biological weapons."

—Edward M. Kennedy, April 5, 2004

"There were no weapons of mass destruction."

—Howard Dean, April 4, 2004

Senator Kennedy and Governor Dean speak as Democrats. They speak as opponents of the war in Iraq. But on the issue of Saddam Hussein's weapons capabilities—the tyrant's development, possession, and threatened use of chemical, biological, and nuclear arms—they also speak as standard-bearers of the conventional wisdom. Over the last several months, ever since David Kay stepped down as head of the Iraq Survey Group and told us that "we were almost all wrong" about Saddam's arsenal, what was once a universally accepted truth (Saddam had weapons of mass destruction) became an apparently self-evident fiction (Saddam had no such weapons). It seems the whole world now agrees that Saddam rid his country of weapons stockpiles shortly after the first Gulf War ended in 1991. With respect to weapons of mass destruction (WMD), at least, there was really nothing to worry about.

But what if that judgment, too, is wrong? Just as wrong, in fact, as was the assumption that Iraqi WMD would be found quickly and easily? Senator John Kerry, interestingly, has been cautious. As recently as April 27 he commented, "Who knows if a month from now, three months from now, you find some weapons? You may."

The truth is Kennedy is right, at least in one regard: There are many questions that deserve answers. Here are a few we would like to pose—both to those who, like Kennedy and Dean, are so certain Saddam was weaponless in March 2003, and also to the Bush administration, which has been virtually mute, and has not explained what it has found and what it now believes to have been the truth about Iraqi WMD.

¶ **Where did the sarin come from?** Last week the Pentagon reported that two U.S. servicemen were hospitalized in Baghdad for exposure to nerve agents. The soldiers were part of an American convoy that came across an unmarked 155 millimeter shell lying on the side of a Baghdad street. When the soldiers attempted to disarm the makeshift bomb, it exploded, spilling out part of its poisonous contents. The shell later tested positive for sarin, the poison developed by the Nazis and used by Saddam against the Kurds in Halabjah in 1988.

The shell in question appears to have been made prior to the first Gulf War. The terrorists who planted the bomb may not have known it contained the deadly poison. But the claim always was that Saddam had not fully relinquished or done away with his pre-Gulf War arsenal. And if the terrorists didn't know the bomb contained sarin, because the casing had no distinctive markings, doesn't that suggest an effort at deception? Doesn't it also suggest that there could have been—and could be—many more of these shells around?

The *New York Times* wasn't worried: "No one can be certain" whether the bomb "did really contain sarin," it editorialized. Besides, "finding some residual weapons that had escaped a large-scale destruction program would be no great surprise—and if the chemicals had degraded, no major threat." But it now seems the bomb did contain sarin. And we do not know that there are only a few such "residual" weapons. Do we?

¶ **How did Jordanian terrorists apparently obtain chemical weapons?** Last month the Jordanians thwarted a terrorist attack in Amman. A terrorist cell linked to Abu Musab al Zarqawi—previously connected to Saddam—planned to explode trucks carrying 20 tons of poison chemicals outside the headquarters of the Jordanian intelligence service. The Jordanian authorities said the blast could have killed up to 80,000 people and wounded around 160,000. Where did the chemicals come from?

¶ **Who is killing Iraqi weapons scientists?** In closed testimony to members of Congress earlier this year, David Kay reported that Saddam Hussein's top scientists have been targeted for assassination. Terrorists and Baathists

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have killed nine prominent scientists since April 9, 2003. All those killed had worked in one way or another on Baathist weapons programs. All had been questioned by the Iraq Survey Group.

¶ **What has Charles Duelfer discovered?** Until January 2004 David Kay led the Iraq Survey Group, the 1,400-member team of scientists charged with discovering easily hidden weapons in a country of 27 million people that's roughly the size of California. In his testimony before Congress, Kay said he believed Saddam had destroyed his weapons stockpiles prior to the American invasion in March 2003. Hans Blix, the former head of the U.N. inspection team, agrees. This helped establish the conventional wisdom that Iraqi weapon stocks would never be found because they never existed.

But the Iraq Survey Group did not end with David Kay's departure. In fact it is still plugging along, now under the leadership of Charles Duelfer, who told Congress in March that "the picture is much more complicated than I anticipated going in." And that it's too soon to reach "full judgments with confidence." Because "we have yet to identify the most critical people in any programmatic effort." What's more, "Many people have yet to be found or questioned, and many of those we have found are not giving us complete answers."

Duelfer has other problems. His team has "recovered millions of documents," but millions were also destroyed in the chaos that engulfed Baghdad following liberation. Also, the documents are "often mixed up." Which means research is "extremely difficult." And Duelfer is understaffed. He especially lacks Arabic speakers. Hence only a "tiny fraction" of the recovered files have been translated. Duelfer is reported to be much less confident than Kay that Saddam had done away with his WMD.

The Bush administration can answer, or can begin to answer, all these questions. But having professed such certainty about Saddam's weapons of mass destruction before the war, the administration now seems intimidated by the new conventional wisdom that Saddam had done away with his WMD. Yet we do know that Saddam had weapons after the Gulf War in 1991, and of course United Nations inspectors spent much of the next six years destroying some of them, despite repeated efforts at concealment and deception by Saddam. The inspectors never were able to account for all of Saddam's weapons. So the question is, what happened to them? No one has adequately answered that question. Not Kay. Not Blix. Not Howard Dean or Ted Kennedy. Not the Bush administration. Maybe we just got one answer: Some of those weapons are still there in Iraq, and they're being used against our troops.

—*William Kristol*

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Michael Moore and Me

An encounter with the Cannes man.

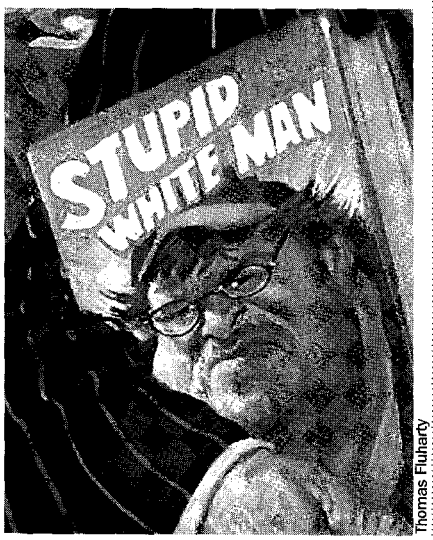
BY FRED BARNES

A FEW YEARS AGO Michael Moore, who's now promoting an anti-President Bush movie entitled *Fahrenheit 9/11*, announced he'd gotten the goods on me, indeed hung me out to dry on my own words. It was in his first bestselling book, *Stupid White Men*. Moore wrote he'd once been "forced" to listen to my comments on a TV chat show, *The McLaughlin Group*. I had whined "on and on about the sorry state of American education," Moore said, and wound up by bellowing: "These kids don't even know what *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* are!"

Moore's interest was piqued, so the next day he said he called me. "Fred," he quoted himself as saying, "tell me what *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* are." I started "hemming and hawing," Moore wrote. And then I said, according to Moore: "Well, they're . . . uh . . . you know . . . uh . . . okay, fine, you got me—I don't know what they're about. Happy now?" He'd smoked me out as a fraud, or maybe worse.

The only problem is none of this is true. It never happened. Moore is a liar. He made it up. It's a fabrication on two levels. One, I've never met Moore or even talked to him on the phone. And, two, I read both *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* in my first year at the University of Virginia. Just for the record, I'd learned what they were about even before college. Like everyone else my age, I got my classical education from the big screen. I saw the Iliad movie called *Helen of Troy* and while I forget the name of the Odyssey film, I think it starred Kirk Douglas as Odysseus.

So why didn't I scream bloody murder when the book came out in 2001? I didn't learn about the phony anecdote until it was brought to my attention by Alan Wolfe, who was reviewing Moore's book for the *New Republic*. He asked, by email, if the story were true. I said no, not a word of it, and Wolfe quoted me as saying that. That was enough, I thought. After all, who would take a shrill, lying lefty like Moore seriously?



Thomas Fluharty

More people than I thought. Moore's new movie attacking Bush was given a 20-minute standing ovation at the Cannes Film Festival. Moore has described the movie as breaking new ground and revealing new facts, but the accounts by reviewers suggest it merely provides the standard left-wing, conspiratorial critique of the president. Reviewer Lou Lumenick of the *New York Post*, who gave Moore's previous movie *Bowling for Columbine* four stars, said the anti-Bush film would be news only "if you spent the last three years hiding in a cave in Afghanistan." Still, I suppose it's not surprising they loved it in France.

In publicizing the movie, Moore has been up to his old dishonest tricks. Just before the screening at Cannes, he charged that Disney had told him "officially" the day before that it would not distribute *Fahrenheit 9/11*. Moore said this was an attempt to kill the film. He indicated a newspaper article had the correct explanation of Disney's decision: "According to today's *New York Times*, it might 'endanger' millions of dollars of tax breaks Disney receives from the state of Florida because the film will 'anger' the governor of Florida, Jeb Bush."

Later, in a CNN interview, Moore admitted he'd learned nearly a year ago that Disney would not distribute the movie. By pretending he'd just gotten word of this, Moore was involved in a cheap publicity stunt. And it wasn't the *New York Times* that said, on its own, that Disney feared losing tax breaks. It was Moore's agent who was quoted as saying that in the *Times*. Disney denied its president Michael Eisner had told the agent of any such fear. "We informed both the agency that represented the film and all of our companies that we just didn't want to be in the middle of a politically oriented film during an election year," Eisner told ABC News.

Where does this leave us? I think it's time for Moore to be held accountable. In *Stupid White Men*, he has 18 pages of "Notes and Sources," but he offers no evidence for the sham interview with me—no date, no transcript. How could he, since the interview never happened?

I have just the person to look into Moore's lies and distortions. Al Franken has taken special interest in public liars, writing a bestseller called *Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them*. Al, the Moore case is now in your court. ♦

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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The Kerry-McCain Fantasy

Dream ticket or Democratic nightmare?

BY NOEMIE EMERY

AT LONG LAST, after a grueling primary season attacking president George W. Bush as pro-life and too bellicose, the Democrats have come up with their dream candidate. And wouldn't you know, he's a pro-life Republican who's keen on the war in Iraq. Just what they wanted, you might say sarcastically, but it turns out that they do: What they want is John McCain, Arizona's long-term Republican senator, whom they want to pair with their nominee, John F. Kerry, in what would be the mother of all balanced tickets: right and left, West and East, outspoken and "nuanced," galvanic and dull. Bob Kerrey wants him, and so does Joe Biden. The *New York Times* played it up in a big front-page story. "A dream team," a veteran liberal says. All agree he would be a blast of fresh air, a shot in the arm, an adrenaline rush that would shake up the system. Left unsaid is the prospect he might be all too exciting, a gust of fresh air that blows out windows, and leaves broken trees in its wake.

McCain, indeed, might prove quite a headache. Here are five reasons why.

1. IT'S ALL ABOUT HIM. The minute the announcement is made, Kerry ceases to matter. McCain would overshadow anyone, and Kerry, who already has a tendency to blend into the wallpaper, would become a bit player in his own campaign. The Kerry-Bush face-off would instead become round two in the Bush-McCain grudge match, a continuation of the 2000 GOP primaries in Michigan and South Carolina. No one would show the slightest interest in a debate between George W. Bush and John Kerry; or between McCain and Dick Cheney. They would want a brawl between Bush and McCain. Pundits would obsess on their psyches and motives. The partisan battle would become an ego war between two feuding Republicans who tend to agree on most major issues. Kerry would be lucky by the third of November if anybody remembered his name.

2. THE VICE PRESIDENT RULES. Dick Cheney is already famous as the most powerful No. 2 in American history, but if a Kerry-McCain ticket should be swept into office, the roles of the president and his ranking subordinate would be reversed. For the first time, a president would owe his office to his vice president, and both men would know it. Would a Vice President McCain then sit quietly by and wait to be called on? What have you been drinking? This would be a co-presidency, if not a McCain one, in everything but its formal description. What's more, an electorate that voted mainly for McCain would expect him to wield genuine power, would back him in any disputes with a President Kerry, and feel deceived if he didn't prevail. So could McCain. "We could see the third vice president to resign in American history," says Larry Sabato. "The policy difference is just too outstanding. He could resign on principle, like John C. Calhoun." Would an electorate that went to bed with a charming, charismatic, irreverent, center-right maverick be happy to wake up in the morning with a dour and depressing

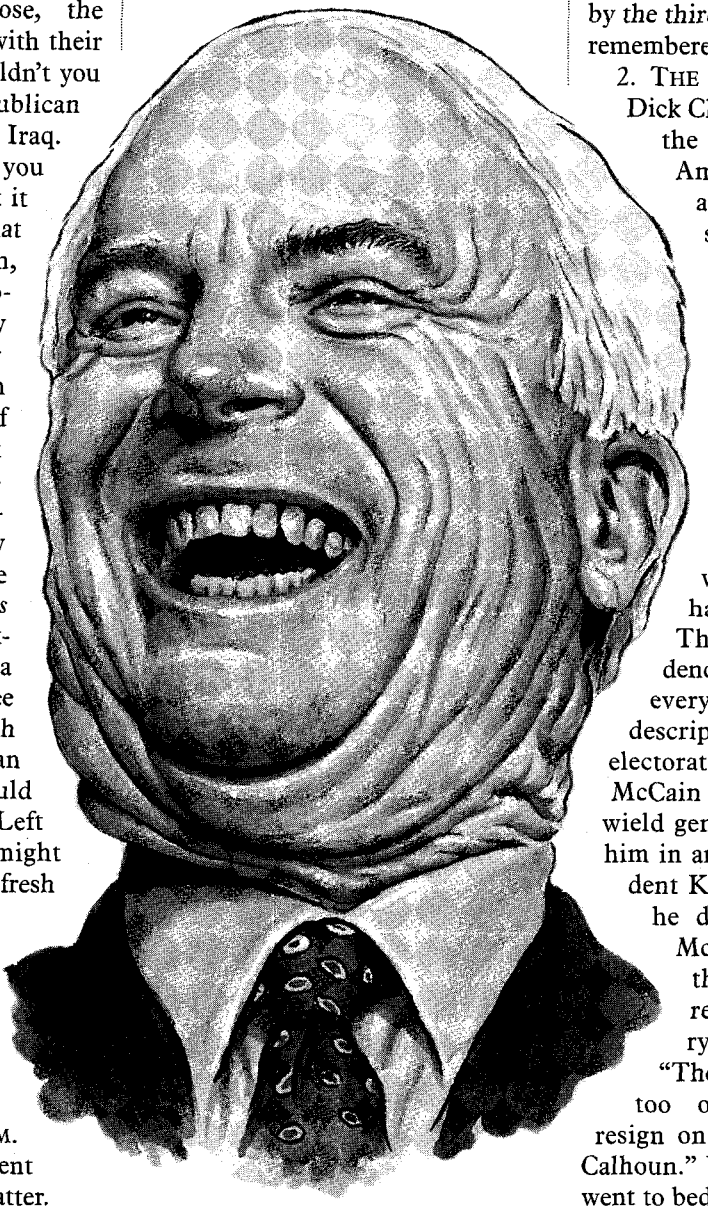

Illustration by Drew Friedman

Noemie Emery is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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doctrinaire liberal? Or would divorce papers be served?

3. TEMPERAMENT TANTRUMS. Then there is the little matter of McCain's personality. No major figure since Theodore Roosevelt has been less suited by temperament for the vice president's job. He is not left, right, or center so much as a devout contrarian, a flamboyant maverick, cut out by fate to butt heads with authority, never so happy as when giving the finger to those in charge. There is a good reason why McCain is not now the president, and it has nothing to do with South Carolina: He has made a career out of lobbing grenades at the base of his party, with which he quite often agrees. Who else would go out of his way to annoy potential supporters? Who else would go into Virginia and launch an attack on social conservatives? In a Republican primary?

Contrast this with the conduct of Arnold Schwarzenegger and Rudy Giuliani, who do have differences with social conservatives, but who therefore take great care not to insult them: They disagree, differ politely, and change the subject to the numerous issues on which they find common ground. McCain, on the other hand, glories in such conflict. Does anyone think he will stop this if he comes to change sides? As a Republican, he has been amusing himself (and the Democrats) by giving fits to George W. Bush and the establishment, largely because they *are* the establishment. How long, in an establishment run by the Democrats, before he starts doing the same to them?

4. IDENTITY CRISIS. John McCain might have been at home in a Democratic party run by Harry S. Truman, or by John F. Kennedy, another ribald and print-savvy war hero who McCain would have surely called "my dear friend." But to graft the head of McCain onto the body of the current Democratic party is to perform an operation that risks organ-rejection. The party's base is pacifist, feminist, hostile to the use of American power, and suspicious of force. Its biggest sources of money and manpower are the teachers' unions and trial lawyers. Its articles of faith are unrestricted abortion and identity politics, and the groups that promote these are accustomed to veto power. How would they react to a pro-life Republican parachuted in behind their lines? Suppose they bit their tongues and tolerated him for the purpose of beating the president. If the experiment was successful, he would bring into their party millions of people indifferent or hostile to their views. The shape of the party would change, as would its center of gravity. If there were to be such a thing as McCain Democrats, they would be to the right of the rest of the party—more pro-life and pro-gun and libertarian, much more disposed to the uses of power abroad. Would the base fight back? Or—Hello, Ralph Nader!—would it start to move out? Under any scenario, today's party would crack, shift, or shatter. It might contract, or expand, but it would certainly not stay the same.

5. DISSONANCE. The rationale for the Democrats in embracing McCain is the same one that energized the base in the primaries: the need to get rid of George Bush. Howard Dean harnessed this frenetic emotion, to which John Kerry pays tribute. But the problem is, on most of the issues that matter, McCain is not much like Dean or like Kerry, and very much more like . . . George W. Bush. Their personalities are even a little alike, which may be one reason they grate on each other. They are both conservative, but not wholly conventional: Bush breaks with tradition on spending and big government;

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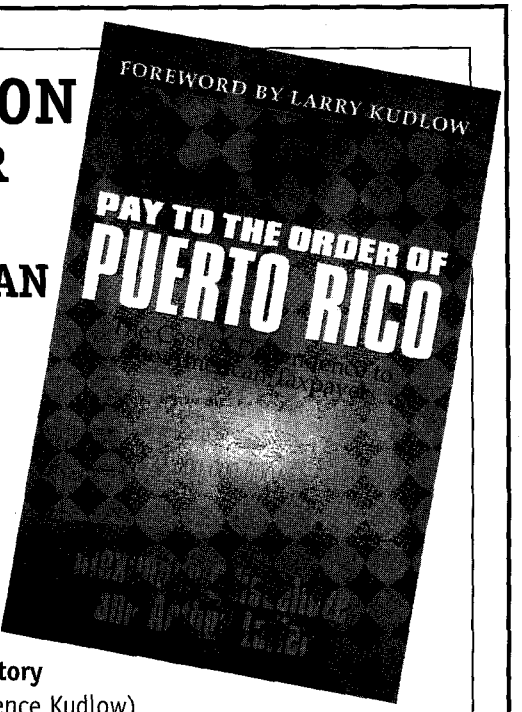

This new book by Alex Odishelidze and Arthur Laffer sheds light on one of the worst tax policies in American history
(With a foreword by Lawrence Kudlow)

The poverty level in Puerto Rico is extremely high, despite a close relationship with the United States and it is kept in this territorial/poverty status just because the pharmaceutical companies want to pocket $4-5 billion in tax credits and Controlled Foreign Corporation profits while taking American jobs overseas.

Allegiance Press
The Right Answers for America

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McCain on issues like campaign finance reform. They are emotional patriots; bull-headed and willful. They're cocky. They swagger a little. They are not metrosexual. Neither has ever been tempted by Christophe or Botox. They like guy stuff, and fit in well in the same sort of venue; such as military bases, and lower-scale sporting events. Blue to the core, Kerry jets between mansions in Boston, Georgetown, Nantucket, and a ski lodge in Ketchum, Idaho. Bush and McCain spend their time in rural settings in the southwestern part of the country. Color them red.

Color them also fairly conservative, at least on the core issues. They are pro-life, if not militant, unperturbed by capital punishment, tend to think force solves a great many problems, and see few things in shades of gray. They are also unabashed advocates of American power, who believe this country has a great moral mission and role to play in the world. Nothing is more certain to enrage progressives, who would then find themselves in a dreadful dilemma—which of the two do they loathe more deeply, Bush's ideas or George Bush? If they hate Bush's ideas, they may choke on McCain, and then go third party. If they hate Bush himself, they may go with McCain, but at the cost of making their party more Bush-like, and cutting into their own hold on power. If they go with McCain, they become a war party, something their base must regard with true horror.

Democratic McCain enthusiasts may tell themselves he is just a device to get Kerry in power, but they overlook two facts: McCain would not be a "normal" vice president, and all men are mortal. Kerry likes dangerous sports and seems prone to accidents; one slip off the snowboard, and, as Mark Hanna once said of Theodore Roosevelt, "that damned cowboy is president of the United States." This is a fate to make Bush-haters tremble: They may vanquish their foe, but only by becoming like him. Nobody said life was fair. ♦

Buckle Up . . . or Else

Tales from the nanny state.

BY ANDREW FERGUSON

EVEN THOUGH ROUGH WINDS do shake the darling buds thereof, I think we can all agree that May is a fabulous month, flush and lusty as the poets say, a time to gather knots of flowers, and buds and garlands gay. It is the month above all of Mother's Day, made doubly so by the decision of the United States government to transform itself for a few weeks every May into a kind of Mom for everybody—your Mom, my Mom, even our Moms' Mom. And this national Mom has a few things she'd like to get settled right here and now, mister.

The government becomes Mom every May under the auspices of the Department of Transportation, specifically the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The NHTSA (pronounced *nhtsa*) has taken to devoting the latter half of the month to an annual "mobilization" program called "Click It or Ticket!" (This year it runs from May 24 to June 6.) It's an unusual name for a government program, isn't it? The exclamation point, of course, is part of the title, though the real problem with the name, in my opinion, is its lack of parallelism. The two halves of the phrase don't balance out, if you see what I mean. *Click it* is a statement in the imperative mode. *Ticket* is just a freestanding noun, or perhaps a verb—it's unclear in what sense the word is being used. Anyway, grammatically, the two halves aren't parallel. They just sound parallel. *Click it or Tick it!* would be parallel. *Click it or Ticket it!* would be parallel. But that's not what they mean. What they mean is, Click it, or Mom will give you a ticket. Mister.

Click It or Ticket! is a mass deployment of the country's law enforcement apparatus and a good deal of its transportation bureaucracy, intended to persuade you to wear a safety belt when you drive your car. More than $10 million in radio and TV advertising will be unleashed. Local police will implement "zero tolerance enforcement of safety-belt laws," blanketing the nation's highways and streets with "checkpoints and saturation patrols" to better monitor the citizenry and hand down citations for those motorists who have the nerve to think they can just drive around unbuckled. School teachers will festoon classrooms with admonitions about what happens to the unstrapped. Lobbyists plan to flood the halls of Congress and state capitols, demanding the enactment of "primary" seat-belt laws.

These primary laws are a recent innovation. They not only make seat-belt use mandatory, they let any fastidious policeman stop motorists on the suspicion that they aren't buckled up. For the most part the primary laws are replacing "secondary" seat-belt laws, which allow cops to ticket an unbuckled driver only when they've stopped him for other traffic violations. Secondary laws have been in place for a generation—a relic of that distant time when primary seat-belt laws would have been considered a frivolous, not to say ominous, expansion of the government's police powers. Now 18 states have marched boldly toward a future of perfect safety by enacting primary laws, and the mobilizers intend on enlisting the rest.

Andrew Ferguson is a senior editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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There are many techniques available to a government intent on saving its citizens from their own laziness or stupidity. The first is fear. Click It media campaigns favor dark, ill-focused ads with spooky voiceovers and a soundtrack fidgety with hip-hop. A recurring image in the Click It literature—Click Lit—is a close-up of a highway patrolman's unblinking face leaning through a driver's window. (Funny, you don't look like Mom.) Other images, mostly of unhappy traffic accidents, are even less appetizing. Local cops have been instructed to appear at neighborhood high schools and ask the students how many wear seat belts, and to hand out mock tickets to those who answer incorrectly, as a way of preparing them for the real thing. For the more literary-minded seat-belt enthusiasts, NHTSA has prepared a prewritten letter to the editor, which they can simply sign and mail in to the local newspaper, as though they had written a real letter all by themselves.

The letter to the editor is full of statistics. No government mobilization can proceed without statistics. Click Lit releases a blizzard of them, all rendered with mysterious precision and certitude. "Each percentage point increase in safety-belt use represents . . . approximately 270 more lives saved," the Click Lit states. That's what it says this year, anyway; in last year's Click Lit the figure was approximately 250 lives. But who's counting? All those traffic accidents with all those mangled bodies, those severed limbs and punctured craniums—they're a terrible human loss, of course, but what's even worse: They're expensive. "Highway crashes cost society $230.6 billion a year," the Click Lit says. Really? How so? Figures like this are never quite explained. Why $230.6 billion? Why not $233.2 billion, or $229.8 billion? I've tried several times over the last few years to track down the calculations behind such estimates, lobbing queries into the green-eyeshades at NHTSA and elsewhere, and have yet to receive an answer beyond, It's complicated. Trust us. (*Because I'm your mother, that's why.*)

The statistical blizzard obscures more than it illuminates, anyway. What it obscures most of all is the question-begging behind safety enthusiasms. The two-part question in regulatory schemes that are designed to make us safer is, How much safer, and at the sacrifice of what? Who doubts that we could save many more than 270 (or is it 250?) lives a year if we imposed a national speed limit of 35 mph and required everyone to wear a football helmet outdoors? We could probably do away with seat belts altogether and still come out ahead—not that I want to give Mom ideas.

In any case, the statistical projections look even iffier when compared with statistical facts. In the United States, traffic fatalities, per mile, are a fraction of what they were 50 years ago. There are many reasons why. We drive in safer cars on better roads, and encounter fewer drunk drivers when we get behind the wheel. And more of us use seat belts. Yet the relationship between any one of these causes and the effect of fewer fatalities is hard to untangle. For instance: Just as seat-belt use has risen—from 67 percent of automobile passengers in 1999 to 75 percent in 2002—traffic fatalities have risen, too: from 41,717 in 1999 to 42,815 in 2002, an increase not accounted for by the increase in miles driven.

No such complication will deter the mobilizers, of course. If fatalities had decreased while seat-belt use increased, they would have cited the fact as evidence that we need more primary seat-belt laws, more checkpoints, more saturation patrols. But because fatalities have increased even as seat-belt use has increased, the coincidence is used as evidence that—well, you know: We need more primary seat-belt laws, and more checkpoints, and more saturation patrols, and more ghost-written letters to the editor . . .

"Safety belt use has increased significantly in the past few years," we read in the Click Lit, "but more must be done."

More must always be done. We must always be made safer, if not freer, and the law of unintended consequences must always be blithely dismissed. The last great project of the safety mobilizers, you'll recall, was to make air bags mandatory in passenger cars. This was saluted as an epochal victory for safety until it was shown that an air bag could have an unexpected side effect on "America's children": It tended to decapitate the little guys.

As a result, needless to say, the federal government rescinded the air-bag mandate and . . . no, wait. That's not what happened. The federal government kept the air-bag mandate and added some new ones—elaborate rules about who can sit where in private cars. When the mobilizers start mobilizing, the effect is always the same: Government mandates spread, the sphere of private decision-making shrinks, and perfect safety remains mysteriously elusive. The upside, from the point of view of the mobilizers, is that they will never be out of work. When I first heard about Click it or Ticket!, I called Lon Anderson, a spokesman for the Mid-Atlantic AAA, who described his organization's energetic lobbying effort on behalf of primary seat-belt laws.

"But now that we've made air bags mandatory," I asked, "and we've made sure everybody is sitting where they're supposed to in the car, why do we need seat belts? Aren't they sort of redundant?"

Lon's voice rose an octave. "Are you serious?" he said. "Are you kidding me?"

I told him I was genuinely curious.

"Look," he said, "do you know what an air bag does? An air bag is an explosion in the closed passenger compartment of an automobile. That thing exerts nearly a ton of pressure as it inflates within that closed compartment. The force is simply incredible. And very dangerous."

"Jeez," I said. "So you mean . . ."

"Exactly," he said. "You need the seat belt to protect you from the air bag." ♦

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On the Afghan Front

With the warrior-diplomats of Blackfoot Company. BY CHRISTIAN LOWE

Khost, Afghanistan

TO GET A FEEL for the security situation in Afghanistan, talk to Major Noor Wahli of the Afghan Border Force. A slight man with warm hazel eyes, he has intimate knowledge of the jagged, barren hills around Border Checkpoint Four. A careful network of informants and delicate relationships forged with elders from the villages that pepper the valleys and redoubts along this frontier with Pakistan give him insight into the enemy that he and his new American allies face.

Two and a half years after the lightning U.S. victory over the radical Islamic Taliban regime that had oppressed this land for more than five years, and despite the expulsion of its al Qaeda paymasters, the United States still has work to do before Afghanistan overcomes its turbulent past.

To be sure, there are signs that the country may be on the road to lasting peace. In the immediate, however, violence is actually rising against Coalition military forces, aid workers, United Nations officials, and Afghan government representatives. The U.S. strategy has been to balance altruism and diplomacy with aggressive counterterrorism. Soldiers can, in one day, arrange for a mosque to be renovated in one village, and assault a neighboring village to capture a suspected terrorist. This "guns and butter" approach has so far served the United States well, in a country whose people are both proud and greatly in need of security. But it is in danger of unraveling, partly because the enemy is granted sanctuary in Pakistan, across the border Major Wahli guards.

One day in late April, some 50 U.S. soldiers walked up a steep rocky path to the village of Zan Shora on a mission that typifies the U.S. strategy here. The cheerful voices of two dozen boys and girls singing Islamic verse in unison wafted through the hot breezy air. Goats wandered lazily between the mud-brick huts, and chickens pecked at the rocky ground. War seemed the furthest thing from anyone's mind.

In the village, U.S. officers sat down alongside the village elder, Mohammad Janil, for some conversation. Talk ranged from the needs of the village and how the coalition could help, to the Afghan presidential elections coming up this September, to tribal rivalries with neighboring villages, to the threat from Taliban and al Qaeda holdouts and the smorgasbord of terrorist malcontents who have entered the region, striking U.S. and Afghan forces from their bastions in Pakistan.

It took a lot of prodding for Janil to accept U.S. help. The soldiers offered to buy some rugs for his madrassa—a favor Major Wahli suggested as an inexpensive way to forge good will—and said they'd send an engineering team to survey the village for a new well. At first Janil demurred. He said he was worried that terrorists from Pakistan would harass his village for receiving help from coalition forces. The soldiers assured him they weren't going anywhere and that Noor Wahli and his men, with U.S. help, would keep the village safe. He took a lot of convincing—even though he'd participated in the January *loya jirga*, the national tribal congress that set the stage for the elections. The soldiers were able to calm Janil's fears and build on their new cooperation to gain helpful intelligence on people filtering through the narrow valleys and along the goat paths that provide ample cover for Pakistan-based terrorists.

That's one way America is fighting for peace in Afghanistan. Warrior-diplomats like Captain Jonathan Chung, company commander for Blackfoot Company, 1st Battalion, 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, build ties to local chieftains, using the all-powerful dollar in exchange for intelligence and a sliver of loyalty. Chung regularly eats a dinner of lamb and rice and drinks tea late into the night with Noor Wahli, discussing the needs of each village in the area, which elders can be trusted, and what malcontents might be passing through. The 28-year-old West Point graduate is conducting U.S. foreign policy in the remotest reaches of this country with only limited guidance and no diplomatic training. But with respect, honesty, and a sincere desire to help, Chung is getting the job done—as are senior enlisted officers, special operations forces troops, and even CIA operatives, across the country.

If only it were so easy.

On April 8, Chung got a chance to practice the counterterrorism part of his assignment. Anti-U.S. militants detonated an improvised explosive device in the dirt road that runs along the Afghan-Pakistan border in hopes of luring American troops in to investigate. A week earlier, a similarly placed IED had been detonated without provoking a firefight. This time, however, the bad guys had a sophisticated plan.

Chung sent a small detachment in to see what had happened. Suddenly there was fire. "All elements, we have contact!" Chung shouted into a radio as his Humvee barreled down the impossibly steep and rocky road to the valley floor. Heavy caliber bullets

Christian Lowe is a staff writer with Army Times Publishing Company. He recently returned from a month in Afghanistan.

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Christian Lowe

A soldier from the 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment talks to a boy from Zan Shora with an electronic translator.

zinged overhead, and the woosh of 107 mm rockets from the Afghan border checkpoint were met with AK-47 fire. It was an ambush.

No Americans were hurt, and the fearsome counterfire from the rest of Chung's unit was enough to drive the attackers back into Pakistan. The entire ambush occurred within sight of two Pakistani border posts, whose occupants did not lift a finger to help the Americans.

"The Pakistani police are worthless," Noor Wahli said through a translator. "The private militias control everything over there. The border police are scared of them. The only ones that can do anything are the Army, and they're not there."

This ambush was the first major contact Chung's soldiers had encountered since early December, when they'd disrupted an assassination attempt against the police chief of Khost. The April 8 attack was followed the next day by another ambush as the patrol left its camp near Border Checkpoint Four. Both firefights lasted only a few minutes, and both times the bad guys got away.

Two weeks later, NFL football star Pat Tillman, an Army Ranger, was killed in still another ambush, soon after two Afghan allies had been killed and four wounded in a four-hour gun battle just 20 miles from Border Checkpoint Four. Again, the enemy slipped back over the border into Pakistan—supposedly one of America's strongest allies in the region.

In other parts of the country, there is violence, too. Two U.N. contract workers were killed in Lagman province while they were making assessments of the security environment for voter registration, and one Marine was killed near Tarin Kowt in central Afghanistan in a nighttime ambush by suspected Taliban holdouts. But nowhere is the situation graver than along Afghanistan's border with the largely ungoverned Pakistani provinces of North and South Waziristan.

Commanders here say the attacks are coordinated from inside Pakistan. Hardened jihadists from Chechnya, Uzbekistan, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia are moving freely into the region, recruiting fighters, planning operations, and even commanding attacks from across the border. The commanders and military intelligence officers say so far these recruits have shown little stomach for a sustained fight against the American air and ground assault that inevitably comes with each contact, but there's evidence the militants are getting bolder.

During an assault on Border Checkpoint Two in mid-April, just one week after the brazen attack on Blackfoot Company, two A-10 Thunderbolt attack jets circled low overhead trying to draw fire so they could pinpoint the attackers and destroy them. Despite that display of American might, the assailants held their position for several hours until Marine gunships swooped in and laid waste their mountaintop hideout.

Clearly, if America is to win the war on terrorism—which began in the hardscrabble hills of Afghanistan—and keep this country on the path toward democracy, the "guns and butter" strategy must be maintained. But it is also critical that when the terrorists attack—even when they attack our Afghan allies—the United States pursue them with dispatch and fury. As long as Major Wahli remains a prisoner in his border post, too fearful of assassination to travel to his home in Khost, America will not have finished its job. ♦

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Rep. Moran (D-Obnoxious)

The Virginia congressman cruises to reelection.

BY RACHEL DICARLO

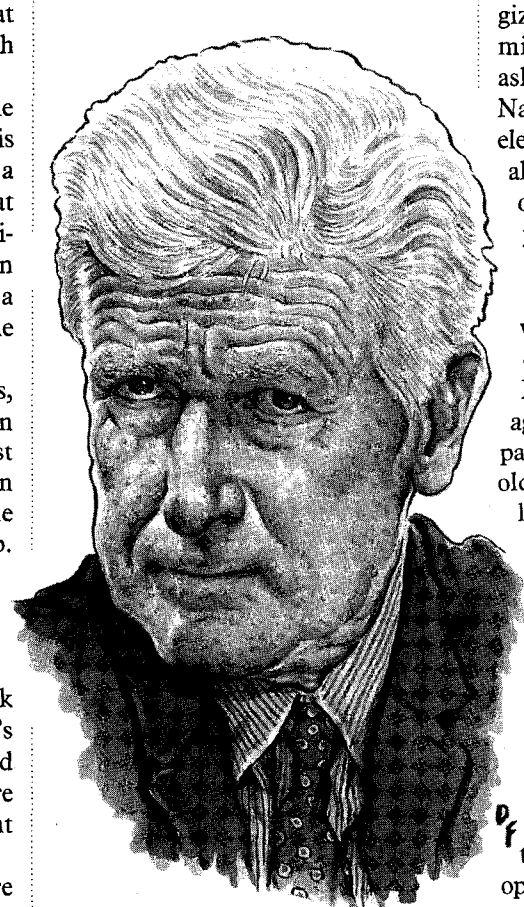
VIRGINIA CONGRESSMAN Jim Moran looks the part. He's tall, stands up straight, and speaks confidently with a northeastern brogue. He's got the preppy-D.C. thing down. At a Democratic "meet and greet" in Arlington recently, Moran arrived wearing a blue buttoned-down shirt monogrammed at the cuff, tucked into khaki pants, with brown deck shoes and no socks.

By the numbers, his district is one of the safest in the House. In 2000, his political security was buoyed by a Republican redistricting plan that crowded as many Democrats as possible into his district, and in his seven terms in Congress he's never faced a primary challenger. If he played by the rules he'd be a congressman for life.

Moran hasn't played by the rules, though. So far he's living proof that an incumbent can get away with almost anything and still win reelection. In 1995, during an argument on the House floor, Moran pushed Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham. On another occasion he threatened to punch Rep. Dan Burton in the nose. In 2000 he made news by taking an 8-year-old boy by the scruff of the neck in the parking lot at his daughter's day-care center, claiming the boy had tried to steal his car. The police were once called to break up an argument between him and his (now ex-) wife.

Besides the confrontations, there have been ethical and financial problems. He borrowed $25,000 from a drug company lobbyist five days before sponsoring legislation to help that lobbyist's client. And he took a $447,000 sweetheart loan from MBNA Corporation four days before endorsing legislation the company had pushed.

He's acknowledged that his reputation precedes him. Last summer, during testimony before the House Budget Committee, Moran told budget director Josh Bolten, "I am sure you're a nice guy. It's just that we've got a responsibility. You're probably a constituent, too. I run that risk. I have already ticked off most of them, so I might as well with you."



Jim Moran

Illustration by Drew Friedman

His most spectacular mistake may have come last year at a question-and-answer session with antiwar activists, when he told them that there would have been no war without Jewish support. "If it were not for the strong support of the Jewish community for this war with Iraq, we would not be doing this. The leaders of the Jewish community are influential enough that they could change the direction of where this is going, and I think they should."

Moran's campaign manager, Dan Lucas, says his comments were misunderstood. "He's a politician that obviously provokes strong emotion. . . . Obviously I don't think he's shown bad judgment."

His colleagues did. Moran apologized, but was reprimanded by Senate minority leader Tom Daschle and asked by House minority leader Nancy Pelosi to step down from his elected leadership position as a regional whip. Six Jewish members called on him not to seek reelection this year and said they wouldn't support him.

Moran is seeking reelection anyway, but his behavior has attracted a challenger. Several prominent Democrats considered running against him, and decided to give it a pass. But Andy Rosenberg, a 36-year-old Virginia lawyer working for D.C. lobbying firm Patton Boggs, will take him on in the June 8 Democratic primary. "I'm running because Jim Moran is making headlines for all the wrong reasons," Rosenberg told me. "Virginia voters want someone who votes the right way and who makes sound judgment calls."

Rosenberg has voted for Moran in the past, and they differ little on the issues. At a May 1 debate, both opposed tax giveaways to the wealthy, expressed concern about power plant emissions, called for universal access to health care, and favored gay rights.

If anything, Rosenberg is running to Moran's left. At the debate he contrasted his endorsement by Americans for Democratic Action with Moran's endorsement by the U.S. Chamber of

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Commerce. The chamber of commerce, he said, is "committed to the Bush economic agenda, and they see a friend in Congressman Moran," while the ADA is a "liberal, progressive advocacy group."

Rosenberg also supports partial-birth abortion. Moran has voted to ban the procedure, although at the debate he said he had changed his mind. "I now believe it has got to be up to the woman." Rosenberg called the flip-flop an "election year conversion."

Though Rosenberg, a former aide to Senator Ted Kennedy, is a newcomer to electoral politics, he raised more money than Moran in the last quarter, and the two men's war chests are now about equal. The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee has refused to help Moran, whose job approval is down to 45 percent. In 2002, the *Washington Post* endorsed Moran's opponent, Scott Tate, in the general election.

This year Rosenberg has attracted help from several prominent Democratic advisers, including John Kerry strategists Robert Shrum and Tad Devine. And Rosenberg has been running a vigorous grassroots campaign. He spends his mornings, afternoons, evenings, and weekends campaigning at Metro stops, community events, and farmers' markets. He says he has over 270 volunteers to help him by going door to door.

It seems beating Moran should be a cakewalk. Yet Rosenberg is running at just 11 percent in his own poll and hasn't raised enough money for television ads to boost his name recognition and blast the incumbent.

In Moran's camp this inspires confidence. "We never take anything for granted, but Rosenberg would have to do regular ads on broadcast television to get his message out," Dan Lucas said. "I don't think Andy has a message, but it is very expensive."

Moran seems to be doing his part to help his opponent, though. "It's not a neat fit, me in the Congress," he told Fox News last March. "I may wear a tie, but I'm probably not meant to be in Congress." ♦

Chen's Balancing Act

Democratic Taiwan fends off Beijing and placates Washington. BY ELLEN BORK

Taipei

ON THURSDAY, Taiwan's president Chen Shui-bian delivered his much anticipated second inaugural address to an audience of 200,000 huddled against the rain on the grounds of the presidential palace. The speech capped months of tension between Washington and Taipei and Beijing. For nearly a year, Beijing's relentless demands that Washington abandon Taiwan had dominated U.S.-China relations, spilling over into other issues like efforts to curb North Korea's nuclear threat and Beijing's subversion of democracy in Hong Kong. China even scored an American rebuke of President Chen in the midst of his presidential election campaign.

On top of all that, the campaign ended with a bizarre election eve assassination attempt against Chen and his vice president. When, the next day, Chen won by a wafer-thin margin, the opposition Nationalists went into a prolonged campaign of protests and legal challenges that persist to this day. (After presenting President Chen with the seal of office, the president of Taiwan's legislature, a Nationalist politician, left the ceremony to join a protest across town.) Days before the inauguration, China warned against a "lurch toward independence" that would cause Taiwan to be "consumed in [Chen's] own flames."

With that kind of build-up, expectations for the inaugural speech ran very high. The future of cross-strait relations, not to mention Taiwan's relationship with Washington, rested in Chen's hands. In the event, the speech was almost anticlimactic.

Chen debunked the notion that he was bound and determined to declare independence and bring about a crisis with Beijing by offering a major concession. Independence, sovereignty, and territorial issues would be excluded from constitutional reforms planned for the second term. Instead, Chen emphasized the need to update the constitution to improve domestic governance through a process of "constitutional reengineering." Just as important, revisions would not be made by referendum, an exercise Washington felt constituted an act of "state creation" that would drive Beijing over the edge. Chen also said, however, that Taiwan's people "would not exclude any possibility" for future relations with China, "so long as there is the consent of the 23 million people of Taiwan."

The question now is, can China take yes for an answer? Judging by a barrage of post-inauguration statements, the answer is it can't. "No one will pay any attention to his words, even if he talks at great length," said a top PRC adviser on Taiwan. A chorus of state-controlled media has also chimed in. "Impossible to see any sincerity," pronounced one paper, condemning the speech as a "game of words." "Another sham," according to the *China Daily*, the English-language propaganda organ.

Perhaps the more important question is, can Washington take yes for an answer? It's hard to see why not. Washington's concerns clearly found their way into the speech. In fact, while it was being drafted, some of

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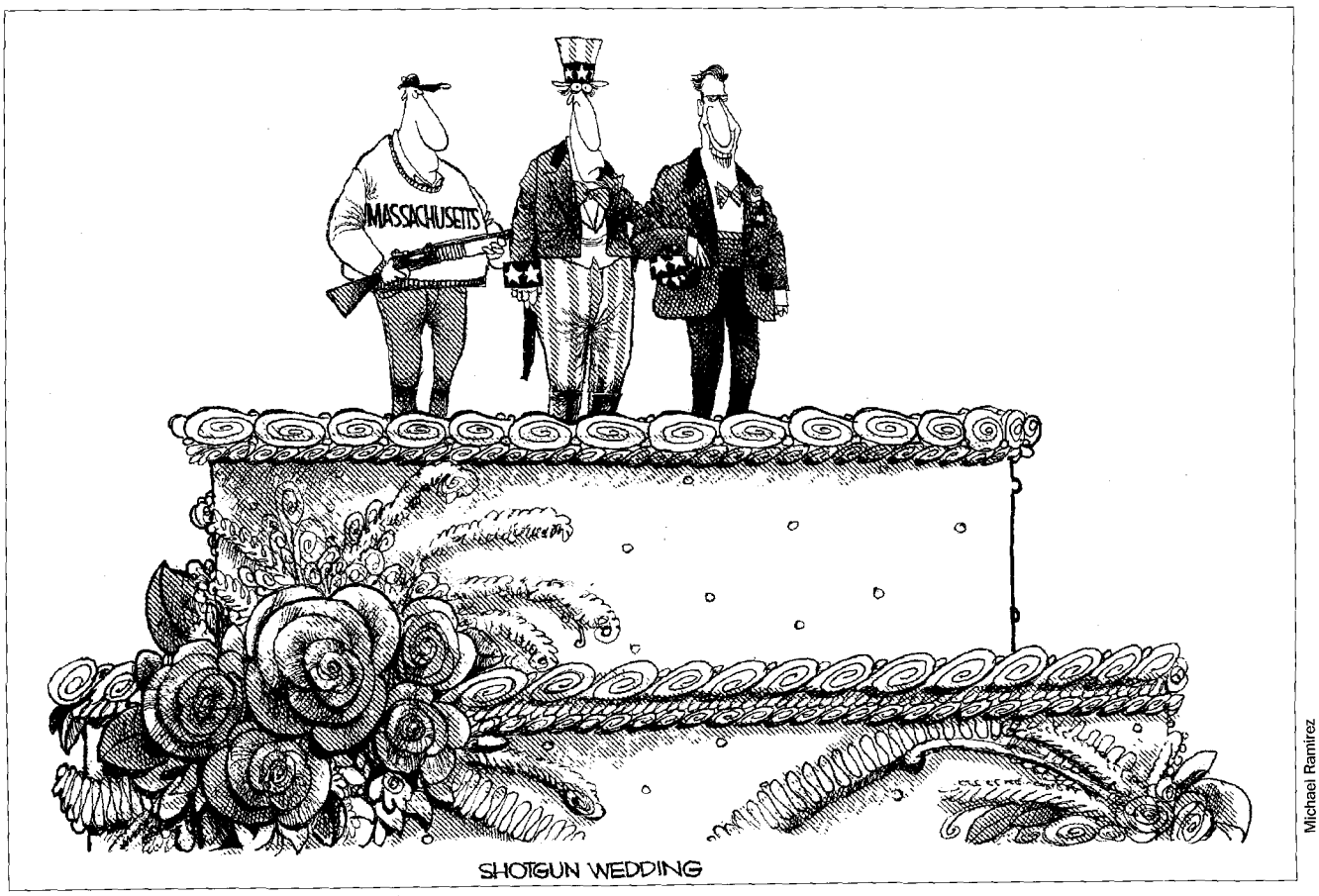
Chen's closest aides went to Washington—something they are not freely allowed to do—to meet with administration officials. After the speech, White House spokesman Scott McClellan praised Chen for being "responsible and constructive." In fact, in addition to addressing the Bush administration's concerns over the sensitive matters of the constitution and independence, President Chen himself repeated virtually word for word Washington's insistence that there be "no unilateral change to the status quo" in the Taiwan Strait.

He also took a step toward satisfying another of Washington's top complaints about his leadership. U.S. officials claim Taiwanese officials do not appreciate the dire military situation they face. Taipei's reluctance to spend the money needed to upgrade its defenses has been a sore point among even those American officials most sympathetic to Taiwan since the Pentagon forecasts that the balance of power in the Taiwan Strait will begin to favor Beijing as soon as six months from now. On Thursday, President Chen declared an imperative to upgrade Taiwan's defenses.

That commitment, coupled with the concessions and conciliation, ought to bring Washington and Taipei closer than they have been in years. However, if it wants Taiwan to grasp the threat it faces, Washington will have a concession of its own to make: It will have to confront the myth of the "status quo" it has created in the face of evidence that no such condition exists. On Beijing's side, there is the military build-up, including at least 500 missiles positioned opposite Taiwan, and China's persistent claims that Taiwan has already met Beijing's criteria for attack.

Taiwan is changing too, but as a result of its democracy. The precariousness of its situation arises from China's hostility. Not surprisingly, but still regrettably, the context for Chen's overtures and concessions has been overlooked. For example, Taiwan's democratic consolidation allows a new understanding that tensions between native Taiwanese and mainlanders were not the product of, as Chen put it, "historical subjugation by ethnic groups, [but] rather, abuse of power by a ruling government," the Nationalist dictatorship. Similarly, Taiwan's democratic character has implications for any future relationship with the mainland. Any changes that are made, Chen said, will require the consent of the governed.

Chen has taken account of Washington's desires, even giving up some democratic prerogatives in an effort to satisfy the concerns of Taiwan's ally and protector, the United States. Washington should return Chen's gestures by recognizing that the threat to the "status quo" in the Taiwan Strait comes from two irreconcilable forces. One is the aggression of a dictatorship. The other is the aspiration of a democracy to survive and prosper. ♦



Michael Ramirez

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Just for the Halibut

A common sense cure for overfishing.

BY DONALD R. LEAL & JANE S. SHAW

BY AND LARGE, it was a disappointment. The long-awaited report of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, issued in April, mostly repeats familiar themes—the need for more research on the resources of the sea, more regulations to protect them, more bureaucracy to implement the regulations, and of course more government spending. But the 500-page tome does not champion a remedy that could end the crisis unfolding before our eyes, the depletion of our fish stocks. It does not fully appreciate that our ocean resources are undergoing what economists call the tragedy of the commons—too many people exploiting a common resource—and that the solution is some semblance of private property rights.

The overfishing problem is well documented. "Thirty percent of the fish populations that have been assessed are overfished or are being fished unsustainably," warned the private Pew Oceans Commission in June 2003. Cod and other groundfish off New England were once so abundant that Basque fishermen made the heroic trek across the Atlantic, yet today, their stocks are near historic lows, and since 1994 taxpayers have spent more than $80 million to assist New England fishermen. Alaska crab, which once made fortunes for the hardy souls willing to face icy waters, are so overfished in some areas that a $100 million buyout has been proposed to reduce bloated fishing fleets. Like the presidential commission, the Marine Fish Conservation Network, a consortium of over 150 national and local environmental groups and fishing groups from both coasts, is sounding the alarm.

Sadly, none of this is likely to arrest the depletion. Calls for fine-tuning the existing regulatory system are futile. Every one of the hundreds of "coastal federal fisheries" in U.S. waters is already managed by a fishery management council, typically composed of fishermen, state and federal regulators, and others presumably eager to protect fish stocks. This hasn't stopped the depletion, and it's no secret why.

CORBIS / Neil Rabinowitz

Halibut fishing in Alaska

Government regulation attempts to prevent overfishing by limiting when, where, and how one may fish. To do this, fishery managers set a commercial harvest limit, a number they think will keep the stock from being depleted. To prevent the catch from exceeding this limit, they cut back the season, and/or reduce the size of the area to be fished, and/or limit the size of boats (since bigger ones could bring home too many fish).

Fishermen react in ways that are rational but destructive. After all, they have bills to pay. They buy faster, high-technology boats that can catch as many fish in less time, even in a smaller area. The result is a wild race for fish. Boats go out whatever the weather (as in the movie *The Perfect Storm*), resulting in accidents, lost boats, tangled gear, and wasted catch. Short seasons also mean that customers must eat processed or frozen fish most of the year, while fishermen's revenues go down.

Yet a solution to overfishing is not hard to find. Individual fishing quotas (IFQs) have been successful in numerous countries, including New Zealand and Iceland, parts of Australia, a growing number of fisheries in Canada, and even in four fisheries in the United States.

With IFQs, the dynamics change. An IFQ represents a percentage of the total allowable catch set each year by fishery managers. It is a transferable right to obtain a specific quantity of fish. If the total allowable catch for South Atlantic wreckfish is 7,400,000 pounds a year, a fisherman with a 0.1 percent quota share would have an IFQ of 7,400 pounds. A fisherman who wants to catch more or less than this amount can buy or sell portions of his IFQ. He can even sell the entire quota share and leave the industry.

With IFQs, it ceases to be necessary to shorten the season to limit the catch. Each fisherman can fish at his own pace, going out in good weather and protecting the quality of the catch until he returns to shore. The hectic race for fish disappears.

Donald R. Leal and Jane S. Shaw are senior associates of PERC, the Property and Environment Research Center in Bozeman, Montana. Leal is editor of Evolving Property Rights in Marine Fisheries *(forthcoming from Rowman and Littlefield).*

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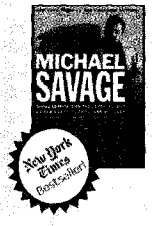

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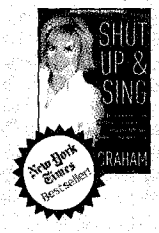

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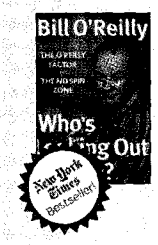

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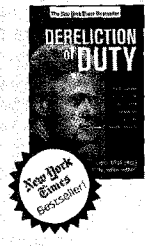

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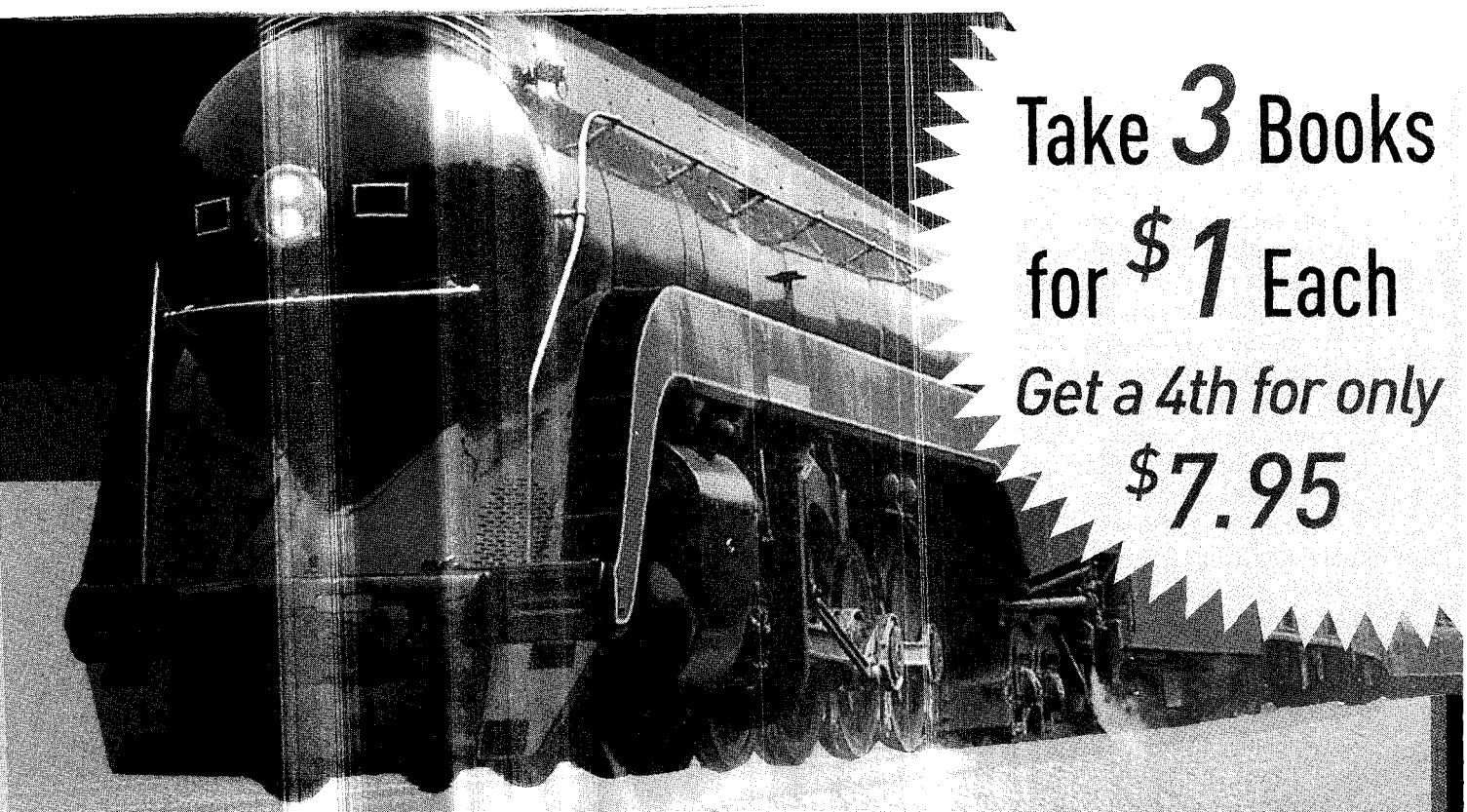

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In Alaska before IFQs, the halibut season was just two or three days a year, and fishermen were hammered by low prices because of the glut when the boats came in. Fishing was hazardous. Lost or abandoned gear and incomplete processing on vessels wasted halibut—a loss estimated in 1990 to be worth at least $3.2 million. And environmental goals were rarely met—the actual catch often exceeded the total allowable catch.

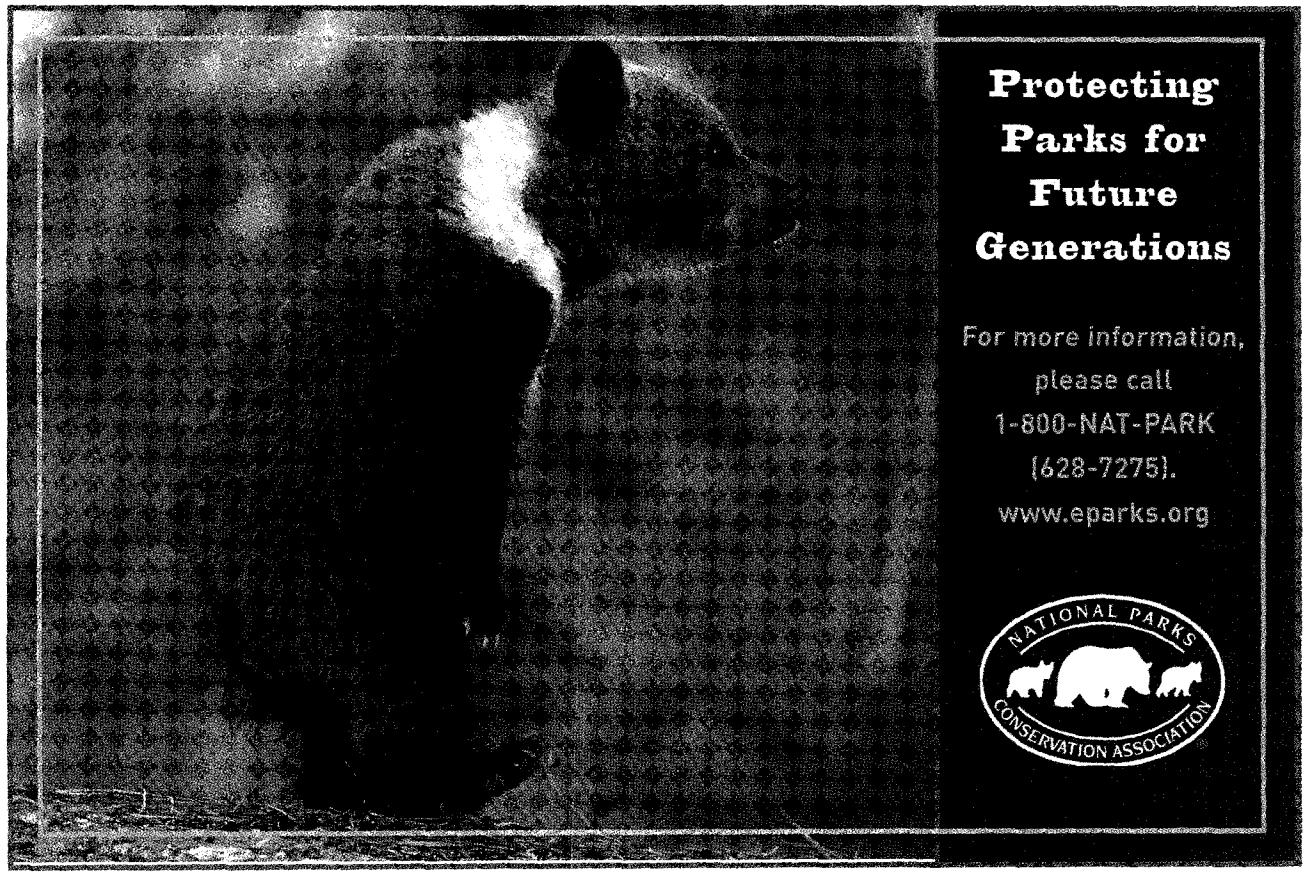
After IFQs were adopted in 1995, Alaska's halibut season grew to 245 days a year. Fishermen now receive higher prices because they can deliver fresh halibut through much of the year. Less gear is lost, fishing is safer, and harvests no longer exceed the allowable limit.

But the potential of IFQs has yet to be realized in most U.S. fisheries. The first IFQs led to protests by special interests, resulting in a moratorium on IFQs from 1996 through October 1, 2002. Major opposition came from fish-processing companies. Faced with two- and three-day seasons, some halibut processors had invested in giant refrigeration units to process the tons of fish that were dumped on them all at once. Processors enjoyed power over the fishermen, who had to find markets for their catch in just a few days. These processors complained of losing their capital investments and market position.

The moratorium in the United States has ended, but IFQs still face an uphill political battle. Last fall, processors in Alaska and the state of Washington found a champion in Alaska senator Ted Stevens. As head of the Senate Appropriations Committee, he exacted a high price for allowing crabbers in Alaska waters to adopt IFQs: His appropriations bill rider requires Alaska crabbers who use IFQs to sell 90 percent of their catch to specific processors—as few as eight processors in one crabbing area. Even though the Justice Department raised antitrust questions about the proposal, the bill carrying Stevens's rider sailed through. It sets a bad precedent for other fisheries.

Free market organizations such as PERC and the Reason Foundation favor IFQs, but so far only one traditional environmental organization has endorsed them: A senior economist at Environmental Defense, Peter Emerson, calls IFQs "the only rational way to manage this resource." The Marine Fish Conservation Network, suspicious of property rights, supports only a tentative and watered-down version of IFQs that would leave fishermen little long-term stake in the health of fish stocks.

Even so, IFQs have the potential for broad bipartisan support. The Bush administration favors them, and Senators John Kerry and Olympia Snowe sponsored a bill that would allow their use. Another supporter—Rep. Wayne Gilchrest, chairman of the Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife, and Oceans—will be working to incorporate them in the reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act later this year, a hopeful sign that a cure for overfishing may be in sight. ♦



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The Michael Moore Conservatives

Meet Britain's anti-American Tories.

By Adrian Wooldridge

There are many things that can be said against Michael Moore. An odd combination of Howard Stern and Paul Krugman, Moore is the king of all left-wing media, from films to books, who specializes in trashing everything that conservative America holds dear. For Moore, businessmen are always trampling on the faces of the poor, Republicans are always the tools of sinister vested interests, and America is always up to no good in the world. But say this for the pudgy *auteur*, he has his uses as a timesaver at dinner parties in hyper-partisan America. If the woman next to you admires Moore, she probably dated Dean and is now firmly married to Kerry; if she regards Moore as a bilious blowhard, then she is probably going to vote for George W. Bush.

Things are a bit more complicated in my native England. Take, for instance, a lunch at a famous Conservative haunt in London's clubland in the tense weeks before the invasion of Iraq. As a visitor from Washington, D.C., I would normally have expected a few warm inquiries about the health of Britain's closest ally; instead, I was subjected to a vigorous inquisition from the assembled Tories.

A retired Foreign Office panjandrum denounced the Bush administration for its crass ignorance of the Arab world. A curmudgeonly barrister proclaimed his intention to march for peace. A senior banker complained that he can't visit New York these days without being shocked by the money-grubbing vulgarity of the place. The only person present who didn't regard George W. Bush as a warmongering simpleton was an American émigré who had worked for Richard Perle in the Pentagon back in the 1980s.

This was my first introduction to the world of Britain's Michael Moore conservatives. Think of all the baggage that one finds in Moore's ideological duffel bag—from his first film, the anti-GM attack *Roger & Me*, through his denunciation of the "thief in chief" in the bestselling *Stupid White Men*, through last week's standing ovation at the Cannes film festival for his latest conspiratorial anti-Bush film, *Fahrenheit 9/11*. There is the belief that American politics is shaped by evil special interests (oil barons, neoconservatives, evangelicals); a preference for "sophisticated" European policies over "simpleminded" American ones; and, above all, a loathing for George W. Bush. All of these views are commonly voiced in the most impeccably conservative circles in London. This is not to say that every true blue cloakroom has a stock of Moore's books, though some do, particularly in houses with children at university (he has sold a million copies in Britain); it is more that British Tories have come independently to exactly the same views as Moore.

Of course, the Tory High Command remains officially Atlanticist. The current Tory leader, Michael Howard, based his political rehabilitation, after the disastrous John Major years, on a breakfast club he set up called the Transatlantic Partnership. The Tories like to claim a shared heritage with the Republicans, dating back to the days of Ron and Margaret, and the brighter Tories, such as David Willetts and Oliver Letwin, raid American think tanks for ideas.

But under the surface, things are changing fast. Indeed, the Tories may have taken a subtle but decisive turn away from their traditional allies in the Republican party. On May 20, Howard wrote a piece in the *Independent*, a ferociously antiwar newspaper that is home to the legendary Robert Fisk, attacking Tony Blair for being slavishly loyal to Bush, and urging him to be a "candid" critic. The language was extremely careful, as you would expect, and Howard stressed both his party's support for the war and its ties to America; but the *Independent* had no doubt about the meaning ("Howard's message to Blair: Time to stand up to Bush"). Nor did Tory Atlanticists. Charles Moore, a leading Thatcherite journalist, immediately attacked Howard for

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making "cheap shots" and pandering to antiwar sentiment. At the same time, the *Spectator*, the house journal of the British right, published a cover story claiming that Republicans are furious with Howard for criticizing Blair. "The White House hates Michael," reported one senior Tory.

If Howard has shifted against Bush—and of course he claims not to have done so—then he is merely reflecting the views of his MPs. George Osborne, the Tory MP for Tatton (and definitely not of the Michael Moore persuasion), reports that John Kerry is significantly more popular than George Bush among both Tory MPs and Tory voters. Indeed, he thinks that Kerry would probably do better in the Tory shires and suburbs than he would do in Labour's urban heartlands. His fellow MPs produce a laundry list of complaints about the Texan in the White House, ranging from his decision to withdraw from the Kyoto treaty to his keenness on God to his general demeanor (he looks as if he "might wail at the moon").

In general, the Tory party's position on the Iraq war is almost identical to John Kerry's. It voted for the war after much grumbling about "crusades" and meddling in other people's affairs. And now the party is keen to exploit Tony Blair's embarrassments about everything from weapons of mass destruction to the abuse of prisoners in Abu Ghraib.

Unconvinced? Try Sir Max Hastings, a former editor of the *Daily Telegraph* and, for a time, one of Mrs. Thatcher's favorite journalists. In a recent column entitled "I hate George Bush" (at least you can't accuse him of burying the lead), Sir Max denounced American conservatives as "lunatics" and proclaimed that "every single bleak forecast about their follies has been fulfilled." To back up these arguments, Sir Max employed the full gamut of Moorist tropes—America is a land of gun-toting religious zealots; the Bush administration thinks that democracy can be marketed in the same way as Enron shares, etc.—before urging his readers to pray for John Kerry's victory in November.

Michael Moore conservatives can be found massing on both wings of the Tory party. On the left, the "wets" (as Thatcher called them) have always believed that Britain's destiny lies with civilized Old Europe rather than with the land of the Big Mac. The slightly elderly lions of this group include Ken Clarke, the bruiser whom wets regard as the best leader the Tories never had, Michael Heseltine, the man who brought down Thatcher, and Chris Patten, who is both the European commissioner for foreign affairs and the vice chancellor for Oxford University.

To a man the wets give the impression that they would be much happier with nice internationalist John Kerry than the Toxic Texan, and they have sniped at American foreign policy. Clarke was the only leading Tory to oppose the Iraq war. Patten fumes about the number of contracts in Iraq that have been awarded to Halliburton, and worries that American foreign policy is being too influenced by supporters of the Likud party.

The other wing of the party, the Little Englander right, is best known for its loathing of the European Union. But it is equally rabid about the United States, a prejudice that was kept under the surface in the Thatcher era but is now bursting out in its full glory. The patron saint of the Little Englanders, Enoch Powell, made no secret of the fact that, if he was forced to choose between America and the Soviet Union, he might have a hard job making up his mind.

The Little Englanders are the heirs of the 1930s appeasers who once proclaimed that they would not "die for Danzig." They regard the Iraq war as providing perfect proof of two of their most cherished principles. The first is that American conservatism is nothing more than neoliberalism in fancy dress. What is all this idealistic talk about spreading democracy around the Middle East? The second is that foreign entanglements—be they European superstates or Iraqi expeditionary forces—are a bad thing.

Dean Godson, the chief editorial writer of the *Daily Telegraph*—or "Daily Torygraph" as it is affectionately known—points out that these prejudices are being helped by electoral dynamics. The Tory party has increasingly been pushed back to its Little England strongholds—the rural shires and a few of the smarter gin-and-tonic suburbs. The average age of its party members is close to 70. These retirees don't regard al Qaeda as a threat to Shropshire or Surbiton; and they tend to associate America with such abominations as the Suez crisis and Elvis Presley rather than with the spread of human rights.

It is hardly surprising that conspiracy theories of the sort that Michael Moore peddles go down extremely well. Several Tory backwoodsmen peers have informed the House of Lords that American foreign policy is being run by a Likudnik cabal. John Laughland recently wrote an article in the *Spectator*, headlined "I believe in conspiracies," in which, among other things, he asked why "you are bordering on the bonkers if you wonder about the truth behind events like 9/11."

Indeed, when it comes to the United States, the British right and the British left often speak with the same voice. The *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Mirror* are at opposite ends of the political spectrum on everything from Europe to fox hunting. But when it comes to the Bush administration it is impossible to tell them apart. The *Daily Mirror* prints John Pilger's overheated prose about the evils of American imperialism. The *Daily Mail* regularly accuses America of being a "neo-colonial bully boy," and, in a breathtaking act of hypocrisy, it has even leapt to the defense of British Muslim

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detainees in Guantanamo Bay. The *Spectator* is becoming as antiwar as the *New Statesman* and has hired Andrew Gilligan, the man who was sacked by the BBC for falsely accusing Tony Blair of "sexing up" a government dossier on Saddam's weapons of mass destruction, as its defense and international editor.

Why are so many British Tories singing from Michael Moore's song book? The obvious reason is Tony Blair. American conservatives may regard Blair as a reincarnation of Winston Churchill, but for most Tories he is the devil incarnate, a cultural vandal who is destroying great British institutions, from the House of Lords to fox hunting, in the name of nonsense such as "Cool Britannia." Tories resent Blair for showing more backbone in dealing with America's enemies, in the form of al Qaeda, than he showed in dealing with the IRA; some of them are also bitter at George W. Bush for bestowing the Churchillian mantle on a left-wing lightweight.

But there are darker reasons for the Tories' embrace of Michael Moorism. One is social snobbery. The Tory Old Guard was much happier with Rockefeller Republicans, with the sort of people who were impressed by Oxbridge colleges and London clubs. George W. Bush represents an America where people actually believe in God, rather than treating religion as a convenient fiction, where people believe in business, rather than dismissing it as a rather grubby pastime, and where people believe that gun ownership should be extended to the masses, rather than confined to people who own grouse moors.

A second might be termed "imperial snobbery." The easiest way to get the chaps in the golf club guffawing is to ask what it would have been like if the Americans had ruled India. The British are convinced that they are much better at understanding "Johnny Arab" than the Americans. (A hint: The way to deal with Arabs is to coopt their local leadership rather than to blather on about democracy, something Johnny has never understood and never will.)

It is axiomatic in Tory England that the coalition's problems in the war on terrorism would melt away if only the British were in charge and the Americans playing second fiddle. U.S. military incompetence is now a running joke in the British press. Unnamed officers queue up to ridicule the Yanks for being heavy-handed in Iraq (look at the way American troops dress up like Darth Vader while the Brits wear berets); for not being brave enough to flush bin Laden out of the caves of Tora Bora (which the SAS would happily have done); and for having no idea how to police war zones (which the British learned how to do in Northern Ireland). Americans may be good at blowing things up; but they have no talent for the more subtle arts of war.

The last is Britain's traditional Arabism. Hostility to Israel is restricted to a Buchananite rump in the United States; in Britain it is widespread on the right (as on the left), with fans in the foreign office, the business world, and the upper reaches of the Conservative party. Middle England has thoroughly internalized the left's view of the rights and wrongs of Israel and Palestine, a view that is propagated daily by the BBC, the Church, the universities, and the influential "camel corps" in the foreign office. One of the most popular political programs in Britain is a radio show called *Any Questions?* that takes selected panelists to town halls across the country. The burghers of Tory Britain react to discussions of the Middle East in much the same way that radical students might in the United States. Denounce Israel as a WMD-armed rogue state and you are guaranteed cheers and applause; defend Israel and you are booed. Indeed, anti-Israeli sentiment is the only area where internationalist Tories are in clear disagreement with John Kerry.

British Tories react to charges of latent anti-Semitism from Washington with much the same fury as American conservatives do to whispers that Bush's foreign policy is run from Tel Aviv. After all, Michael Howard is Jewish; so is the shadow chancellor, Oliver Letwin, and so is Michael Rifkind, who might well be foreign secretary (again), were Howard to win the election. That would give the Tories a considerably more Jewish leadership than the Republicans; but the plain fact is that it would be considerably less sympathetic to Israel not just than the Bush administration but also than Margaret Thatcher's governments. Lady Thatcher idolized Golda Meir; it would be hard to find Tory MPs of any religious persuasion who would want to be seen shaking Ariel Sharon's hand.

In the end, looking for sinister motives behind the Michael Moore Tories is something of a fool's errand for American conservatives, because it misses the bigger point. In terms of right-wing parties, it is American conservatism which now looks the exception, not British conservatism. After all, the Tories' anti-Bush, anti-Sharon views are typical of educated rightists across Europe. Rather than being the woman who redefined British conservatism, Thatcher looks ever more like a momentary exception. While the Republicans have continued to move to the right, the Tories have slipped back to the center, proclaiming their allegiance to the National Health Service and cooling on the case for tax cuts.

One of the favorite images of Tories comes from the Second World War, just after the fall of France; it shows a British Tommy, standing alone on a sea-tossed crag, shaking his fist, with the caption: "Very well, alone." If you happen to sit next door to any Michael Moore Tories, you might well feel the same sentiment. ♦

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Going Dutch?

Lessons of the same-sex marriage debate in the Netherlands

By Stanley Kurtz

Only a few years ago, two prominent demographers hailed the Dutch family as a model for Europe. Somehow the Dutch had managed to combine liberal family law and a robust welfare state with a surprisingly traditional attitude toward marriage. Even as a new pattern of highly unstable parental cohabitation was sweeping out of Scandinavia and across northern Europe, the Dutch were unswayed. To be sure, premarital cohabitation was widespread, but when Dutch couples decided to have children, they got married. At least they used to.

Today, marriage is in trouble in the Netherlands. In the mid-1990s, out-of-wedlock births, already rising, began a steeper increase, nearly doubling to 31 percent of births in 2003. These were the very years when the debate over the legal recognition of gay relationships came to the fore in the Netherlands, culminating in the legalization of full same-sex marriage in 2000. The conjunction is no coincidence.

A careful look at the decade-long campaign for same-sex marriage in the Netherlands shows that one of its principal themes was the effort to dislodge the conviction that parenthood and marriage are intrinsically linked. Even as proponents of gay marriage argued vigorously—and ultimately successfully—that marriage should be just one of many relationship options, fewer Dutch parents were choosing marriage over cohabitation. No longer a marked exception on the European scene, the Dutch are now traveling down the Scandinavian path.

Call it the end of the Dutch paradox, the distinctive combination of liberal social policies and traditional behavior. On euthanasia, prostitution, drug use, and now gay marriage, Dutch law is the cutting edge of Western liberalism. Yet among Dutch people, drug use and sexual license are far from rampant. Many have asked whether this balance of tolerance and tradition, with its deep roots in Dutch culture and history, is sustainable over the long term. At least for marriage, the answer appears to be no.

The origins of Dutch tolerance lie in the mercantile pragmatism of Holland's Golden Age, under the republic of the 17th and 18th centuries. Back then, the Dutch had their own Puritans, who, as American gradeschoolers used to learn, harbored the English religious dissenters for more than a decade before they set sail on the voyage that would take them to Plymouth Rock. More recently, Holland's blend of tolerance and tradition found expression in the late 19th- and early 20th-century policy of "pillarization." Dutch society was divided into three "pillars." Calvinists, Catholics, and socialists lived in self-contained worlds, each with its own universities, newspapers, football leagues, and eventually radio and television stations. Working together, the elites of the three pillars kept conflict at bay by setting principle aside and adopting an attitude of pragmatic toleration.

Today, the ghost of pillarization survives in the Dutch tendency to cede a large degree of cultural liberty to others, while behaving traditionally themselves. When a new social movement presents itself to a Dutchman, he typically says, in effect: Do as you please, but I'll go on as before. This tolerance for what is culturally alien is a legacy from a world built on religion. Not obvious is what happens when tolerance remains and religion disappears.

No Western society has secularized more radically or rapidly than Holland. The cultural revolution of the 1960s weakened the churches. Once faith became too fragile to sustain the social order, the pillars collapsed. The Netherlands changed from one of the most religious countries in Europe to one of the most secular. Today, nearly three-quarters of the Dutch under 35 claim no religious affiliation. The very speed of the collapse virtually guaranteed that some traditional patterns of behavior would linger at first. Sooner or later, though, would Dutch society fray, as one social experiment after another drew down the cultural capital of the past?

This question has come into sharp focus around the family. Even as premarital cohabitation became nearly universal, and as cohabitation acquired virtually equal

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status with marriage under Dutch law in the 1980s, scholars attributed Holland's continuing attachment to parental marriage to the persistence of the Calvinist and Catholic moral codes.

Not everyone applauded this. Many of Europe's social scientists and public intellectuals are cultural radicals who hope to see marriage replaced by cohabitation and an expanded welfare state. But in 2002, British demographer David Coleman coauthored an article with one of Holland's premier demographers, Joop Garssen, that held up the Netherlands as an alternative to the Swedish model. Noting Sweden's falling fertility rate, unsustainable welfare system, and burdened children reared in fragile cohabiting families, Coleman and Garssen proposed Holland's combination of liberal laws, liberal social welfare policies, and relatively traditional marriage as a better pattern to sustain the European family.

Coleman and Garssen, who focused on the years through 1998, noted the beginning of what would turn out to be an unusual annual increase of two percentage points in Dutch out-of-wedlock births. It would continue for seven consecutive years (and counting), as parental cohabitation spread and Holland's vaunted marriage traditionalism waned. What happened?

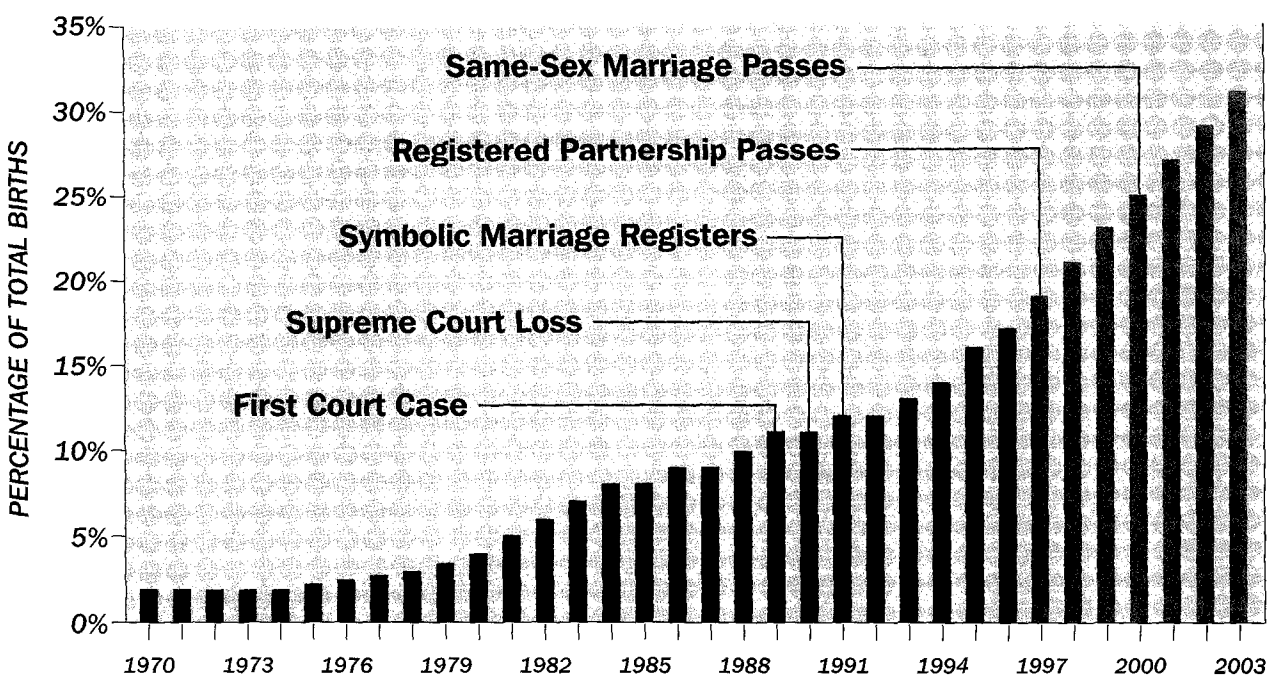
One thing that happened was the push for same-sex marriage. It began in earnest in the Netherlands in 1989. After several attempts to legalize gay marriage through the courts failed in 1990, advocates launched a campaign of cultural-political activism. They set up symbolic marriage registries in sympathetic cities and towns (although the marriages had no legal force), and the largely sympathetic news and entertainment media chimed in.

The movement picked up steam after the election of a socially liberal government in 1994—the first government since 1913 to include no representatives of the socially conservative Christian Democratic party. A series of parliamentary debates and public appeals began that would run through the end of the decade.

In 1996, the lower house of parliament passed a motion calling for gay marriage, and the government began to plan for full-fledged same-sex marriage. The following year, parliament legalized registered partnerships. Same-sex couples appeared on a honeymoon television show and the like. Finally, same-sex marriage was approved in late 2000. By then, large majorities in parliament had come around: The lower house passed gay marriage 109-33, the upper house 49-26. The law became effective on April 1, 2001.

Out-of-Wedlock Births and the Campaign for Same-Sex Marriage in the Netherlands, 1970-2003

Red bars show the years in which the annual increase was two percentage points, double the average annual increase of the previous 15 years



SOURCE: Dutch Central Bureau for Statistics

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Before meeting this defeat, the defenders of traditional marriage, needless to say, fought back. With one voice, they swore that procreation and parenthood were the essence of marriage. In the first serious national debate on the issue, in 1996, Christian Democratic party chairman Hans Helgers made this case. And in 2000, Kars Veling, speaking for three of the smaller religious parties, repeatedly highlighted what he called the unique and universal procreative structure of marriage.

The most sustained and acute presentation of the argument from procreation probably came from Cees van der Staaij, a member of parliament from one of the small religious parties, the SGP. Van der Staaij argued in 2000 that the principle of equality cannot by itself resolve the issue of same-sex marriage. The equality principle applies only to those who are similarly situated. If procreation is essentially related to marriage, and even the possibility of procreation is "*structurally missing*" in same-sex couples, then heterosexual and homosexual couples are differently situated, and the equality principle does not apply.

Van der Staaij pointed out a critical problem in the government's proposal for same-sex marriage. Would the law recognize the usual ties of descent between children and married couples? Would, say, the female spouse of a mother who conceived a child automatically become the parent of the biologically unrelated child? If so, the implication was, might such a child have three simultaneous legal parents? And if so, would this not set off a cascade of legal pressures to repudiate the two-parent standard (a process that is playing itself out right now in Sweden)?

The government opted to avoid the issue by denying automatic parental rights to same-sex spouses. But, as Van der Staaij noted, that decision opened up a dangerous gap between the traditionally conjoined notions of marriage and parenthood. The dilemma itself stood as stark proof that in a matter heretofore central to marriage, homosexual and heterosexual couples are indeed differently situated.

The proponents of gay marriage never bought this. In 1996, in the pages of their flagship publication, *De Gay Krant* (The Gay News), columnist Cees van der Pluijm sharply rejected the notion that marriage ought to be defined by the possibility of having children. True, Van der Pluijm himself opposed marriage, favoring instead a morally neutral system of relationship regulation. Marriage, he said, is essentially a fairy tale of permanent monogamy that deserves to be repudiated by all. Nonetheless, Van der Pluijm affirmed that, on the principle of equality, if heterosexuals can marry, homosexuals ought to be allowed to do so as well. From his radical perspective, that could only change the meaning of marriage and relationship for the better, since gays, Van der Pluijm affirmed, are the symbol of an alternative morality, of sex separated from procreation, of freedom, and of modern life.

Four years later, during the final parliamentary debate on gay marriage, Otto Vos—a spokesman for the centrist-liberal VVD party, at the other end of the pro-gay-marriage coalition—made much the same radical argument. Embracing a definition of marriage as separate from parenthood, he argued that the real basis of marriage is the love between two partners. Actually, Vos said something more remarkable than that.

What he said was, "Proceeding on the basis of the notion that love between two partners forms the most important driving force in selecting one of the forms of relationship, there is absolutely no reason, objectively, to distinguish between heterosexual love and homosexual love." Vos, in other words, joined in the call for treating marriage as just one choice on a menu of relationship options.

Gay marriage opponent Van der Staaij had warned of exactly that. If marriage is decoupled from procreation, asked Van der Staaij, how can other radical innovations be avoided? He cited a 1984 article from *Nederlands Juristenblad* (The Journal of Dutch Law) that called for the total removal of marriage from the sphere of the state. Superficially, said Van der Staaij, legalizing same-sex marriage seems to be the opposite of abolishing marriage. Yet by stretching the notion of marriage to embrace a complex array of alternative forms, one would accomplish the legal abolition of marriage by other means.

Nothing illuminates the cultural shift in the Dutch understanding of marriage so clearly as the contrast between the conservative Van der Staaij and the centrist-liberal Vos during the final gay marriage debate in 2000. Vos, like many in his party, had opposed gay marriage only two years before. Once Vos and his party moved firmly into the gay marriage camp, the parliamentary battle was over.

It is noteworthy that when Vos switched sides, he did not adopt a moderate defense of same-sex marriage. He never argued that gay marriage would strengthen marriage for all. Instead, Vos flipped from traditionalism to a view of relationships barely distinguishable from that of radicals like Van der Pluijm.

It wasn't necessary for Van der Staaij to wait years to see his warnings about the slippery slope from gay marriage to de facto abolition of the institution borne out. Indeed, Vos himself approvingly cited the very article from *Nederlands Juristenblad* that Van der Staaij had brandished as a warning. Yes, said Vos, the government ought to get out of the marriage business altogether. The state has no business encouraging citizens to choose marriage over other relationships.

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Startled by Vos's radical shift, leaders of the other parties pressed him to explain his change of heart. Tellingly, Vos attributed his own earlier opposition to gay marriage to sheer inertial traditionalism.

So the juxtaposition of Van der Staaij the steadfast traditionalist and Vos the new radical encapsulates the shift in the Dutch understanding of marriage precipitated by the decade-long debate over same-sex unions. Van der Staaij speaks for those increasingly marginalized Dutch who continue to view marriage in largely traditional terms. Vos represents the secular center, once content to ride the rails of tradition, now radicalized by the same-sex marriage debate.

These two emblematic leaders' radical view of gay marriage is widely held. The leaders of *De Gay Krant*—the sparkplugs of the movement for gay marriage—always sought full social recognition for homosexuality, not the reinforcement of the position of marriage in society. *De Gay Krant*'s history of the gay marriage movement makes no mention of what in America is called the "conservative case" for same-sex marriage—the argument that gay marriage will encourage gay monogamy and strengthen the unique appeal and status of marriage for all.

The Dutch movement for gay marriage got a major boost when the main Dutch gay rights organization, the COC, finally joined *De Gay Krant* in the fight. For the first five years of the battle, COC had refused to support the cause, on the grounds that marriage was an oppressive and outdated institution. The COC never changed its mind on that score. When it finally joined hands with *De Gay Krant* in 1995, COC openly declared that this was a tactical shift that did not signify acceptance of marriage as an institution.

The Dutch left was similarly frank about its radical understanding of gay marriage. During the 2000 parliamentary debates, Green party spokesman Femke Halsema said it was only when considered superficially that the drive for same-sex marriage appeared to contradict the feminist quest for the abolition of marriage. In reality, said Halsema, conservative opponents were largely right to claim that gay marriage would be tantamount to the abolition of marriage—which was exactly why gay marriage was a good thing. Halsema added that the logical consequence of her position was that registered partnerships ought to be protected and encouraged as a nontraditional alternative to marriage.

The Greens had recognized the radical significance of gay marriage as early as 1996. At the time, Dutch lesbian intellectual Xandra Schutte argued in *De Groene Amsterdammer* (The Green Amsterdammer) that providing gay marriage as one of a menu of relationship options was the equivalent of the abolition of marriage. Necessarily, Schutte emphasized, gays would be trendsetters in removing the connection between marriage and parenthood, thereby pushing society toward a more flexible conception of relationships (which, she said, could include three- and foursomes).

A comparable position was implicit in the stance of the governing coalition. During the 2000 debate, Boris Dittrich, spokesman for the liberal D66 party, a member of the governing coalition and floor manager of the gay marriage bill, suggested that changes could be made to registered partnerships that would establish them more securely as a "light" alternative to marriage. So the main government sponsor of the gay marriage bill was still another who saw same-sex marriage as an invitation to further experimentation with the relationship system.

And that is exactly what has developed in the years since gay marriage was enacted. The revised parental leave act passed by parliament in 2001 extends the rights of married couples and registered partners to unregistered cohabitors. The 2001 revision of the tax code also extends rights to unregistered as well as registered partners. These legal changes—which came five years into the upsurge of Dutch parental cohabitation—confirm that the legalization of gay marriage in the Netherlands is associated not with renewed emphasis on the privileged status of marriage but with the opposite.

Dutch opponents of gay marriage don't seem to have spent any time rebutting the "conservative case" for gay marriage. Why should they? All participants in the debate—the gay community as well as the political left, center, and right—took gay marriage to signify the replacement of marriage by a flexible and morally neutral range of relationship options.

To appreciate gay marriage's role in encouraging the recent upsurge of Dutch parental cohabitation, we need only take seriously what participants in the Dutch debate said. Spend a decade telling people that marriage is not about parenthood and they just might begin to believe you. Make relationship equality a rallying cry, and people might decide that all forms of relationship are equal—especially young people, of family-forming age, most of whom have left religion behind. Dutch conservatives made a valiant stand for procreation and parenting as of the essence of marriage, and they were soundly beaten. Having duly considered and rejected the essential tie between marriage and parenthood, the Dutch started to abandon their inertial traditionalism and began to experiment with parental cohabitation in record numbers.

Again and again, voices from across the political spectrum argued that gay marriage signifies the demotion or abolition of marriage as the socially preferred setting for parenthood. It should come as no surprise when Dutch parents act accordingly. ♦

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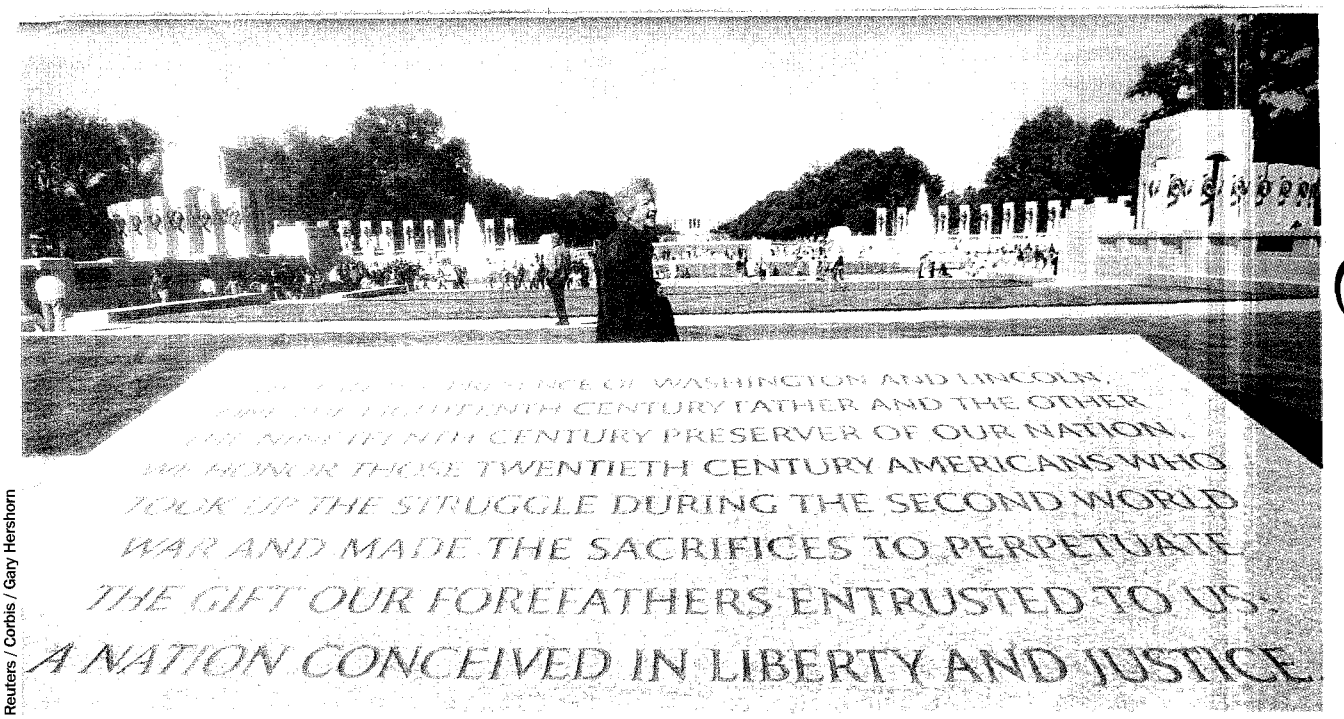

Reuters / Corbis / Gary Hershorn

In Memoriam

World War II on the Mall By Catesby Leigh

At the main entrance to the new National World War II Memorial in Washington, the visitor encounters this rather ponderous inscription on a formidable chunk of granite: "Here in the presence of Washington and Lincoln, one the eighteenth century father and the other the nineteenth century preserver of our nation, we honor those twentieth century Americans who took up the struggle during the Second World War and made the sacrifices to perpetuate the gift our forefathers entrusted to us: a nation conceived in liberty and justice." All this verbiage endeavors to explain two things: This is a memorial, and we decided to run it across the Mall, between the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial, even though that made some folks really angry.

It's a bad sign when a memorial needs a big inscription to let you know that it is, in fact, a memorial. Uninformed visitors looking at the World War II Memorial from a distance might not realize what they are looking at. Standing on the grounds of the Washington Monument and looking west, you see a sunken plaza with a big pool and a pair of vertical water sprays, along with two semicircular arrangements of free-standing pillar-like blocks flanking pavilions at the north and south ends of the plaza. The words "Atlantic" and "Pacific" inscribed on the pavilions provide a clue. But the elms surrounding the memorial site dwarf the pillars, partially obscuring the pavilions and diminishing their scale. This anti-monumental camouflaging of the World War II Memorial will be even more accentuated when the elms at the east end of its site are mature.

We shouldn't exaggerate the point. The World War II Memorial does look like some sort of ceremonial venue, even from a distance. Typically, however, memorials are objects, composed with architectural and sculptural elements that offer a legible subordination of parts to the whole. A memorial is usually endowed with an emotionally resonant focus. In traditional work, it is often sculptural: a statue or relief panel. But even Maya Lin's minimalist Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall has such a focus: the vertex where her two wall sections meet.

Lacking all this, the World War II Memorial seems merely a memorial plaza, not a memorial. It is a place, not a monument, and it lacks anything resembling a focus. As a place, it's not bad, particularly in a city that has had limited success creating good civic spaces in recent decades (Freedom Plaza and Pershing Park on Pennsylvania Avenue are two lamentable examples). No doubt the tens of thousands of World War II veterans who will flock to this venue for the official dedication on Memorial Day will find much to like.

The memorial's defects begin with the fact that the wrong site was chosen for it. It is located across Seventeenth Street from the Washington Monument grounds, on the great Mall axis extending from the Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial. From the beginning, a cardinal restriction on its design was that it not intrude on this axis. And despite the exaggerated denunciations of preservationists, who attempted to mire the $175 million project in litigation, it does not intrude.

Catesby Leigh is a regular contributor on architectural topics to The Weekly Standard *and author of the forthcoming* Monumental America and its Discontents.

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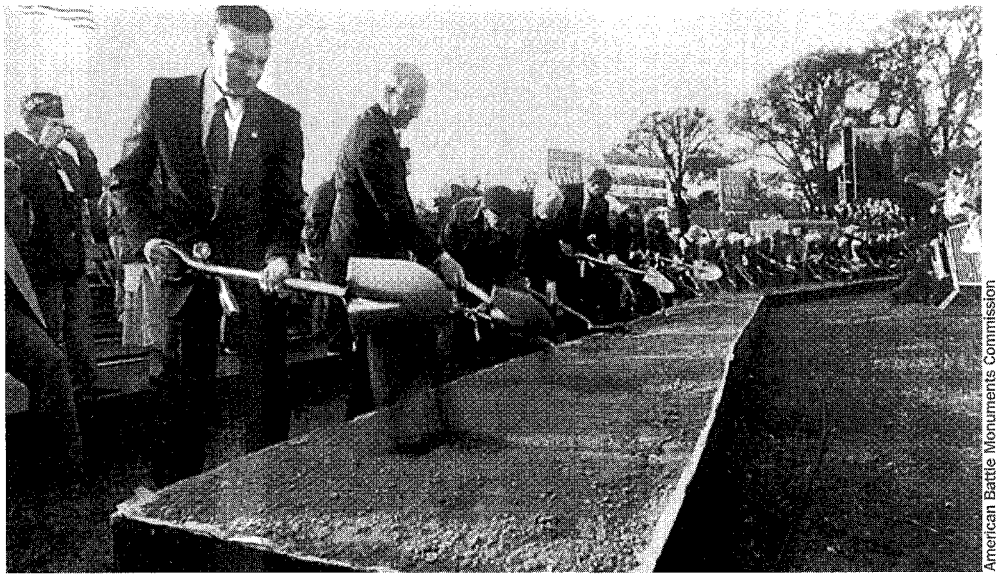

American Battle Monuments Commission

The groundbreaking on Memorial Day 2000.

That's precisely the problem. A memorial to World War II should be *very* intrusive. If a memorial to the great crusade against Germany and Japan can't intrude—and it can't, because that would disrupt the grand symmetry of the Capitol-Washington Monument-Lincoln Memorial ensemble—it should have gone elsewhere. It should have been built where visitors need not descend into a sunken plaza. It should have been built where an emphatically vertical mass could sit squarely on a major axis. Those sites exist: the spacious circle at the Virginia end of the Arlington Memorial Bridge, or Scott Circle on the Sixteenth Street axis, six blocks north of the White House. (The equestrian of General Winfield Scott could surely be accommodated elsewhere.) What's more, a great honorific arch—of which Washington presently has none, unlike any other major Western capital—would have been the appropriate form for such a monument.

At the World War II Memorial, we get most of the elements of an appropriately heroic visual display, but rather than being arrayed, as they ought to be, in a massive, imposing, unitary form, they are dispersed in a paved landscape extending over one third of the memorial's seven-and-a-half acre site. Such memorial sprawl reaches absurd extremes at the nearby Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. At the World War II site, it is thankfully more confined—but diffusion still reigns.

A great arch is broken down, as it were, into the memorial's pair of granite pavilions overlooking a 337-foot-long plaza. The plaza, situated six feet below ground level to avoid any disruption of the Mall, harbors the reconstructed Rainbow Pool. The pavilions take the form of four-fronted arches and rise 43 feet above ground level. The dispersal of architectural elements at the memorial gets out of hand with the 28 granite pillars arranged in semicircular formations at each end of the plaza, with the pavilions in the middle of these formations. Wheat and oak wreaths of bronze are suspended from exposed armatures in the see-through pillars—the pavilions' piers likewise have narrow vertical openings—and each pillar is inscribed with the name of a U.S. state or territory. The visitor is left to wonder why we need a roll call of the states and territories at this memorial. Indeed, the pillars, which are 17 feet above grade, are useless accretions that clutter up the design.

The World War II Memorial's sculptural decoration is decidedly incomplete, but it is of a generally high order. Beneath the unglazed oculus in its roof, each pavilion contains a sculptural composition in bronze consisting of four eagles resting upon columns, with a great laurel wreath suspended from ribbons the eagles clutch in their beaks. In this compressed space, the eagles' wingspreads nearly touch. The pavement inside each arch features a handsome circular bronze relief, an enlarged rendition of the Victory Medal bestowed upon every World War II vet. This beautiful composition features a Liberty figure, in drapery and with a leather cuirass over her shoulders, holding the hilt of a broken sword in one hand and its blade in the other. Her foot is perched gracefully on a helmet, and the rays of the new day's sun radiate in the background. A guilloche motif has been added to the relief's circumference. There is also a nice balustrade, with two entwined ropes in bronze substituting for balusters, that alternates with the pillars.

Twenty-four realist relief panels with scenes from the war and home fronts, based on extensive archival photograph research by the memorial's sculptor, Raymond Kaskey, will adorn another balustrade—this one flanking the very broad and gradual descent into the plaza from Seventeenth Street. This descent, by the way, is quite effectively designed to ease the visitor's sense of the plaza's sunkenness. The eight balustrade panels in place when I visited the memorial were impressive.

On the other hand, the pair of flagpole bases flanking the Seventeenth Street entrance cheekblocks are poorly modeled even by comparison with the familiar Bacon double lampposts that stand nearby. And the pillars ineptly substitute for the crucial element in the monumental vocabulary lacking at the World War II Memorial: the human figure in the round. There are six huge granite cheekblocks at this memorial. They mark the beginnings of the entrance balustrades, alongside Seventeenth Street, as well as each end of the two pillared hemicycles. They do not serve their obviously appropriate function as pedestals for heroic figures, whether allegorical or realist, or both.

Why this suppression of the heroic figure? Is it a matter of official Washington's phobia of making too bold a statement on the Mall? Of reiterating the dynamic figures at the Iwo Jima memorial in Arlington (or the troop of overgrown toy soldiers at the Korean War Memorial)? Is it a feeling that the heroic figure is art-historically and sociologically exhausted, inimical to that mysterious phenomenon known as "modern self-consciousness"? Perhaps

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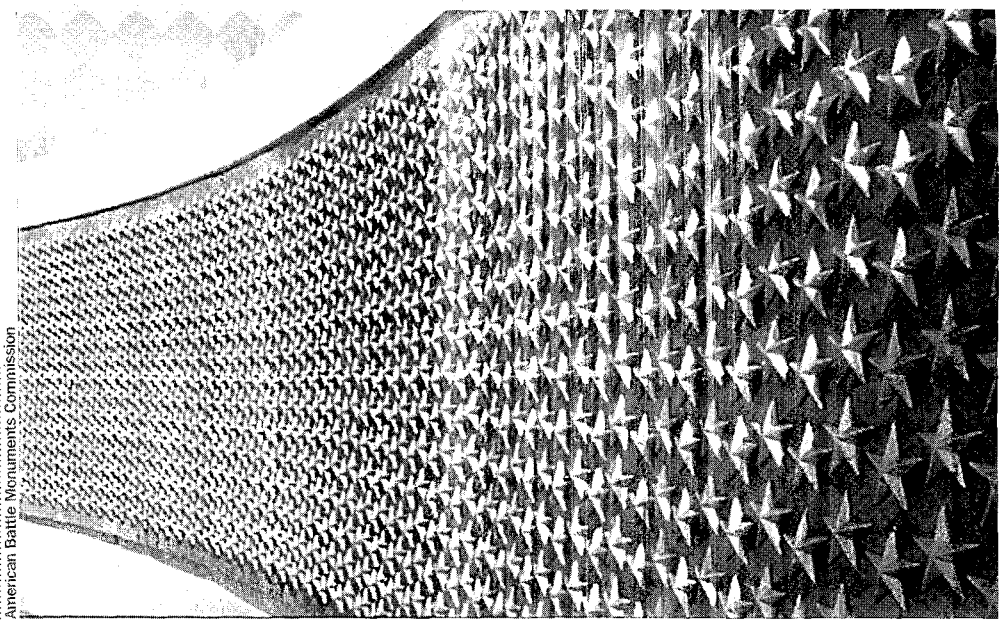
it arises from the shibboleth against "glorifying war," as if traditional war memorials in this country weren't concerned rather with glorifying those who have risked, and all too often given, their lives in the cause of liberty.

Another major problem is the Freedom Wall. This is a curved wall on the sunken plaza's west side, adjacent to the Reflecting Pool. Flanked by waterfalls and fronted by a still pool, the Freedom Wall is decorated with 4,000 gilt stars suspended from a bronze panel with a pale green patina. Each star stands for 100 Americans who lost their lives in the war. The stars vary somewhat in size, and Kaskey has avoided placing them in tidy rows, but it doesn't much matter. They pack zero perceptual punch. Not surprisingly, there is yet another granite block bearing an explanatory inscription in front of the Freedom Wall, this one proclaiming, "Here we mark the price of freedom." We ought to declare this a law of memorial design: If you have to put up a sign explaining what an element in your memorial is doing, then it's doing nothing.

The Freedom Wall, like the memorial's cluttering pillars, reflects the difficulty the design architect, Friedrich St. Florian, had reconciling his conceptualist roots with a perceptualist tradition. Born in 1932 in the Austrian city of Graz and long associated with the Rhode Island School of Design, St. Florian made his name decades ago as an experimental modernist whose designs turned up in university museums rather than on building sites. He struggled during the memorial design process with the "sacred precinct" where the Freedom Wall is situated. At one point he proposed a cluttered scheme including a granite cenotaph block minimally decorated with wreaths, and, behind it, a tilted, jagged basalt plane symbolizing the "seismic upheaval" of war—with an eternal flame shooting up in its midst. The panoply of stars may be simpler, but it is obvious St. Florian never attained his goal of providing an unconventional focus for the memorial that would express the tragedy of war.



American Battle Monuments Commission

The result is that the visitor leaves the World War II Memorial with no sense of that tragedy—experiencing it instead precisely where he ought to: at Arlington Memorial Cemetery.

As for the pillars, the good news is that they supplanted the even more forlorn array of capital-less columns contained in St. Florian's original competition-winning scheme of 1996. Like the pillars, the "headless" columns supported nothing, but they represented a heavy-handed attempt at symbolizing the trauma of war, and at giving a canonic classical form a postmodern twist. As built, however, the memorial contains nothing so jarringly unconventional. There is really nothing postmodern about it at all. It might pass, in fact, for a period piece, a specimen of the stripped classicism of the 1920s and 1930s. The pavilions' boxiness and minimal exterior enrichment certainly conform to the recipe, but they compare very unfavorably with Sir Edwin Lutyens's pair of arched pylons that flank his World War I cemetery for British troops at Etaples, France. With their intricate massing and decorative banners carved in the round, Lutyens's pylons are much more powerful and evocative forms.

Within the confines of site requirements and reductive classicism, however, St. Florian and Kaskey can claim some noteworthy achievements. The contrast between the frozen movement of the eagles' spread wings and the pavilions' static forms registers vividly. Also, the lack of tension in the ribbons the eagles clasp in their beaks makes the wreaths appear to be floating in the air—a fine touch. The memorial's overabundant inscriptions employ a majestic Roman font developed by Nicholas Benson. And though the pillars are monotonous, a degree of rhythm is created by the alternation of their upright pedestals with the battered, or inward-tilted, bases for the balustrades with the entwined rope motif connecting them—the latter a simple but effective symbol of national unity.

The pavilion balconies, perched over two-tiered fountains, have uncut balustrades, with concave panels (both inside and out) substituting for balusters and making room for the knees of visitors who lean on the top-rails while gazing into the plaza. Water drain grills bear the motif of the star-in-a-circle-with-flanking-bars known to anybody who ever stuck a decal on a model warplane. Even the vertical openings in the pillars and pavilion piers, though they weaken the sense of mass such forms should convey, reward scrutiny. These openings are not just rectilinear voids, but rather boast slightly recessed, rounded jambs that enrich the interplay of light and shade. The pier openings, for their part, frame picturesque glimpses of the pavilion interiors and the plaza beyond.

Such attention to detail is welcome, but what is most encouraging about the World War II Memorial is that it reflects a sense of the city as a place of spectacle and dramatic vistas. In striving to convey a sense of openness and transparency at the memorial—hence

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those see-through pillars and piers—St. Florian has sought to frame engaging views not just of the Lincoln Memorial and Washington Monument but of the World War II Memorial precinct itself.

The memorial is thus designed to encourage circulation. Ramps with benches carved out in front descend from the pavilions into the plaza. The visitor walks not only across the plaza to get from one pavilion to the other, he also walks above and around it, taking in a wide variety of views of the memorial and its surroundings. The plaza not only provides a welcome counterpoint to the vast, amorphous landscape surrounding the Washington Monument, it is a people place—a place to see and be seen. Washington possesses too few spaces of this kind.

The preservationists were quite mistaken in their contention that the Rainbow Pool and its surroundings should be left untouched. There was always a need for a landscape-oriented episode at this rather barren spot on the Mall. But never, of course, a major monument. It goes without saying that a World War II Memorial should *not* be a place to see and be seen—let alone a place to soak one's weary feet, now that the warm weather is upon us—any more than the Lincoln Memorial is. Nor should the names of battles and battle-theaters be girding fountains, as they do at the World War II Memorial. What does a battle roster have to do with a fountain? It belongs inside an arch or on the pedestal of a soldier's statue.

But the World War II vets wanted this site. And they have loads of political clout. In our factoid-besotted era, it is not surprising to hear the World War II Memorial's apologists celebrating the fact that its location puts the Vietnam and Korea Memorials in proper historical perspective, as they are situated in less conspicuous sites off the Mall's central axis. Nor is it surprising to find the inscribed slab at the entrance to the memorial making a wordy time-line connection with Washington and Lincoln.

Nonetheless, the idea that monumental Washington should read in historical sequence is ridiculous. *Sequence*, in its trivializing documentary sense, is the enemy of memorials. An honorific arch, for example, resides within an ahistorical realm. Literally, as the historian of ancient Roman architecture, William L. MacDonald, has observed, arches often occur at crucial nodes—points of inflection—in a city's network of streets and avenues. But imaginatively, arches rank among the noblest monumental denizens of the timeless city conceived as the great theater in which the human drama plays.

World War II deserved one. Instead we must settle, at the National World War II Memorial, for a welcome hint of better things to come in the nation's commemorative art, as modernism's neurotic inhibitions gradually wear away and classicism's youthful exponents grow in numbers, skill, and accomplishment. ♦

Novel Efforts

The latest from A.S. Byatt and John Gregory Dunne.

BY BROOKE ALLEN

Picking up a book by A.S. Byatt is always a pleasing experience whether or not one feels any interest in the subject matter, for she is a consummate professional in a literary arena filled with careless amateurs. Her verbal skill and the economy and power of her prose are very rare. Here, for instance, is a description of the onset of extreme physical pain, from her new collection, *Little Black Book of Stories*:

> Then one morning pain struck her like a sudden beak, tearing at her gut. She caught her breath and sat down, waiting for it to pass. It did not pass, but strengthened, blow on blow. She rolled on her bed, disheveled and sweating. She heard the creature moaning. She tried to telephone the doctor, but the thing shrieked raucously into the mouthpiece, and this saved her, for they sent an ambulance, which took the screaming thing to a hospital, as it would not have taken a polite old woman.

Little Black Book of Stories
by A.S. Byatt
Alfred A. Knopf, 240 pp., $21

Nothing Lost
by John Gregory Dunne
Alfred A. Knopf, 335 pp., $24.95

How well this is said, and how briefly.

In the five stories that make up *Little Black Book*, Byatt explores the weird and even the supernatural. The opening tale, "The Thing in the Forest," sets the tone: Two little girls are evacuated from London during World War II and find themselves, temporarily, billeted at an ancient country estate. Playing in the nearby woods they see a horrifying creature, a sort of giant worm. Their lives continue on their separate paths, each blighted in some way by what they have witnessed. When they meet again as middle-aged women, one of them muses on the apparition: "I think there are things that are real—more real than we are—but mostly we don't cross their paths, or they don't cross ours. Maybe at very bad times we get into their world, or notice what they are doing in ours."

A similar crossing of worlds occurs in "The Pink Ribbon," the most affecting of these stories. James, an elderly man, spends his life caring for his wife Madeleine, stricken with Alzheimer's. The pointlessness of her life and the pain and drudgery of his own are driving him mad; whenever he manages a brief foray to the shops he straightens his back, "breathing the outside air in great gulps, like a man who has been suffocating or drowning," and he sometimes broods, "as anyone in his position occasionally must brood, he sup-

Brooke Allen is a writer in New York City.

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Quintana Roo Dunne / Knopf

John Gregory Dunne

posed, on what could be done, swiftly, with a plastic bag."

But he dutifully goes through the motions, hardly remembering what Mado, as he calls her now that she has become mad, was like before her illness. One night he is visited by an attractive young woman who claims to be fleeing a mugger. She comes in for a drink; they talk; he is startled by how much she seems to know about him and his life. As the days go on and the woman's visits continue, he comes to realize that she is a manifestation of Mado's young self, begging him to set her free. Byatt's weaving of these mysterious events into James's repetitive, painfully prosaic daily grind achieves not just verisimilitude, but truth.

Byatt is one of the most intellectual of current fiction writers; her intellect is her greatest strength, but also, ultimately, a bit of a handicap, as is demonstrated by the collection's central story, "Body Art." Through the characters of a male obstetrician, a female art curator, and a young installation artist who becomes pregnant by the obstetrician, Byatt introduces and explores enough themes to fill a five-hundred page novel: religion, marriage, a woman's right or lack thereof to control her own reproductive system, the relation of art to the human body, and many more. Byatt deals with her subject smoothly, as usual, and carries each of her many themes to its logical conclusion, but the reader follows with head rather than heart or gut, and the characters function more as puzzle-pieces for the author to manipulate than as credible beings.

Byatt's neat, spare, cerebral technique provides a real contrast with John Gregory Dunne, who completed his last novel, *Nothing Lost*, just before his sudden death in December. Dunne's work tends to be larger than life, sloppy, a colorful and entertaining reflection of the American scene he documented throughout his career, and *Nothing Lost* does for the high-profile courtroom trial what earlier Dunne books did for the seamy worlds of Las Vegas and Hollywood.

It focuses on the gruesome murder of a black drifter, Edgar Parlance, and the legal and media players that glom onto the trial of the two low-life whites who are his alleged killers. The trial quickly turns into "a major media event, bringing with it the usual suspects, talking heads prattling about race hatred and the phenomenon of what they insisted on calling 'Terror in the Heartland.' It was a heartland that existed only in their fevered imaginations."

Dunne, who covered the O.J. Simpson circus for the *New York Review of Books*, certainly knew his material. It is effectively delivered by his narrator, the lawyer Max Cline, whose dry comments enhance the tale: "It is my own feeling," Max observes of the relentless 24/7 news coverage of the Parlance case, "that life began going downhill with 'You give us twenty-two minutes, we'll give you the world.'" The trial takes place in the imaginary state of South Midland. Its capital, Capital City, is the quintessential Midwestern metropolis—think Sinclair Lewis's Zenith eighty years on—run by a good-ol'-boy-and-girl network of lawyers and politicos who pursue shady agendas while pandering to a constituency whose first and perhaps only priority is the success of the local university football team.

Dunne's cast of characters includes J.J. McClure, a quietly ambitious prosecutor; his wife Poppy, a glossy, in-your-face right-wing congresswoman whose own ambitions inevitably take priority over those of her husband; and Carlyle, a vapid teenaged supermodel who foots the bill for the defense of her half-brother, one of the killers, but simultaneously cashes in by producing a hip, condescending coffee-table book about the trial. All of this is fine satire and will strike countless chords of recognition with readers who have watched too much CNN or Fox. And which of us hasn't?

Michael Trevillion / Knopf

A.S. Byatt

But Dunne tried to make *Nothing Lost* more than satire: With his central character, a brilliant, beautiful, and rather tragic lawyer named Teresa Kean, he aimed to make it a serious novel. Only the most skillful writers have succeeded in mixing satire with serious, realistic fiction, and Dunne has failed this time; the outrageous Poppy McClure and the tormented Teresa can hardly coexist in the same story, and Poppy and her ilk inevitably win out through sheer vitality.

Dunne was careless, too, in his narrative technique—or perhaps he had simply not finished revising at the time of his death. He established a good narrator in the cynical Max, but then abandoned him in favor of the third person whenever he wanted to describe scenes to which Max was not privy: Rather than adding texture to the novel, these changes shift the focus almost randomly, giving the impression that Dunne just couldn't be bothered to make much of an effort.

The reader would do well to skip the parts of the book that deal with Teresa's banal angst and to dwell, instead, on Dunne's marvelous command of modern America in all its garish glory. It was always what he did best, and on this level, his final work does not disappoint. ♦

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On the Waterfront

Remembering that Manhattan is an island.

BY TIM MARCHMAN

Manhattan, although it rarely seems to be so, is defined by its rivers on either side. Bridges and tunnels mark off "the city" from New York's other boroughs as well as the rest of the world, psychically as well as physically. And yet, Manhattan's waterfronts are characterized mainly by neglect.

With the end of World War II began a long slow decay of the waterfronts, which once teemed with commercial and manufacturing activity and served as the engine of the city's ascendance. The last few years have seen tentative steps towards the creation of the postindustrial waterfront, especially on the West Side, but these have yet to inspire other such projects.

The shoreland of Manhattan, east of the FDR Drive and west of the West Side Highway, is nevertheless the site of some fine works of civil engineering. New developments on the West Side have quietly reinvented miles of that dreary stretch, attracting bicyclists, tennis players, idle walkers, and rentiers to newly greened spaces. The potential of the East Side, and some of that of the West, meanwhile remains hidden among a catastrophe of misuse—rotted piers and anonymous residential towers, decommissioned factories and impound lots, most of it ringed off from the people by wide impassable highways.

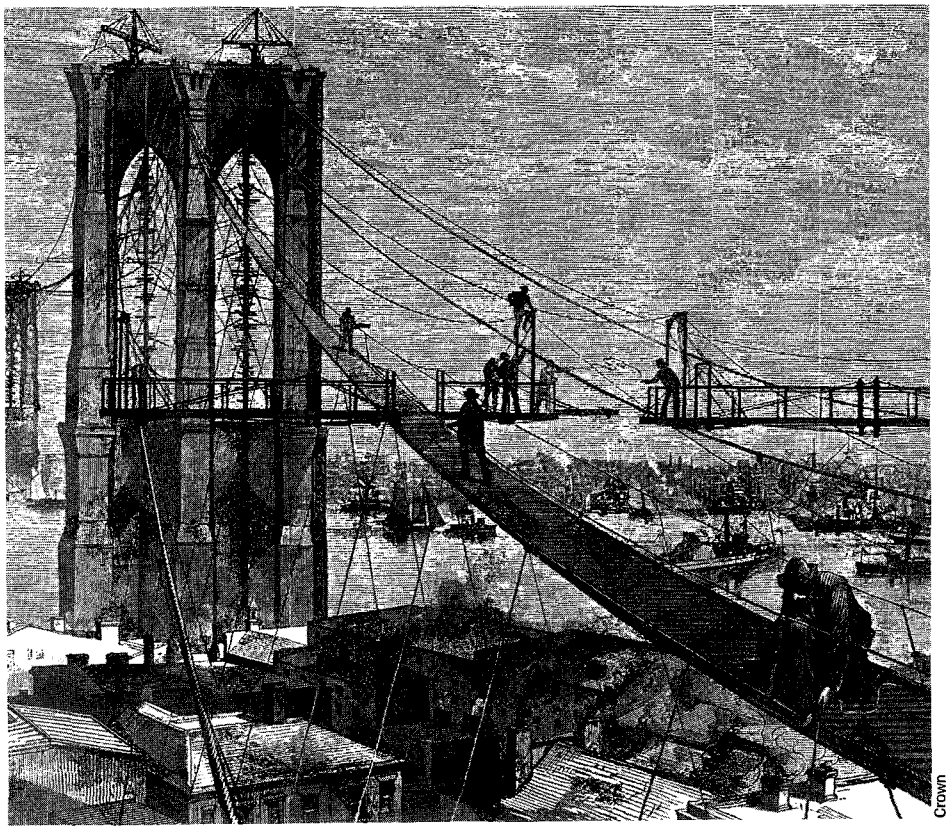
Now, this may not be an entirely bad thing. As Phillip Lopate puts it in his wonderful new book:

> Maybe it's not such a bad idea for New York to hold on to incomplete zones that inspire dreams and anxieties. If you walk around Manhattan's waterfront today, you encounter a bewildering mix of edge-experiences that range from the blighted to the elegant, to the postmodernist pastiche, to the unfinished, to near wilderness. The sense you most often get is that everything the city doesn't want to deal with, everything "repressed," has been pushed to the water's edge. Salt mounds, auto salvage shops, beer-can recycling companies, defunct factories with smashed windows peeling in the sun, parking-violation tow pounds, huge parking lots for all the sanitation trucks on earth, S&M bars, public housing. Not for nothing do so many storage warehouses exist along the river, sheltering the old family dining sets, college books, and other obligations to the past that space-pinched New Yorkers think they need to hold on to, but are halfway to abandoning.

Waterfront
A Journey Around Manhattan
by Phillip Lopate
Crown, 421 pp., $25.95

When Lopate adopts the viewpoint of the *flâneur*, as he does here, it is difficult not to admire the sheer chaos of the urban waterfront—the provisional nature of it all, the way it functions, as do the older and better of city streets, as a "palimpsest of multiple erasures."

Here is an abandoned power plant, vines trailing from its broken windows; there is a waterlogged pier, a remnant of the old port; between them, sagging and seamed, is an office building from which Melville might have peered one bright day while examining shipping manifests. What monster would seek to impose order on it all?



Crown

Tim Marchman writes regularly for the New York Sun *and is an editor at* NewPartisan.com.

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Lev Nisnevitch

The *flâneur*, of course, is not the only one who will find himself walking along the water. The historian will ask himself how the waterfront, so recently the engine of the civic economy, came to resemble a mouthful of broken teeth. The politician and the activist will ask themselves how this broken land might help them secure advantages. The developer will ask himself where profit lies. The mother who raises her child in a dark high-rise will wonder why she is expected to push her stroller across six lanes of traffic to get him near the water.

All of them will find food for thought in *Waterfront: A Journey Around Manhattan*. Organized as a walking tour along the edge of the city, it is somewhere between a belle lettrist's meditation on the waterfront and a miscellaneous history. Along with many a personal digression, the book contains odds and ends like an account of the pirate William Kidd, a historical aside on the warlordism of the old longshoreman's unions, notes on Joseph Mitchell ("It was as though Mitchell were trying to see how far you could go as a writer in sustaining interest without resorting to conflict"), and a consideration of the long death of Westway, an initiative to submerge the West Side Highway and open the resulting space as a series of public greens and commercial developments.

If the improvised nature of the waterfront is the city in microcosm, Westway is the waterfront in microcosm. The project, conceived in the late 1960s by planners in New York's Housing and Development Administration, would have placed six lanes of highway underwater from the Battery Tunnel to 42nd Street at federal expense and opened 234 acres of land for public use, of which, according to Lopate, 93 acres would have been reserved for parks. It was defeated in 1984 on environmental concerns that were clearly just a pretext for its opponents, many of them the sort of 1960s holdouts for whom community activism is its own end. The real objection of these activists to Westway was that it opened waterfront real estate to the market. The question of how large, vibrant mixed-use development can take place without the involvement of commercial interests was never answered, but the nature of New York politics did not, and does not, require much past raising such objections and claiming a position of ideological purity.

The veto power held by neighborhood activists is symptomatic of larger, structural problems that prevent the coherent development of many of the city's resources. On the one hand, a committed fringe can bog down a project of immeasurable potential benefit for the city as a whole through the courts, community boards, and the City Council; on the other, unelected and unaccountable individuals, most famously Robert Moses and most recently Bloomberg deputy mayor Daniel Doctoroff, are sometimes in a position to ram projects through by sheer force of will.

Witness New York's bid for the 2012 Olympics, the most important waterfront development project since Westway, and one that has so sapped the Bloomberg administration's intellectual and political capital that it has left downtown without a champion just two years after 9/11. The grand plan for the 2012 Games, the brainchild of Doctoroff, implies a shift of the city's economic center from downtown to midtown. For billions of dollars, Manhattan will receive a football stadium it doesn't need, a grave security threat, and the probable destruction of the resurgent Hell's Kitchen neighborhood. It is exactly the sort of utopian development scheme that periodically erupts in Manhattan and blights the city for generations.

There is hopefully a balance to be found between disused rail yards and vast, unnecessary sports complexes on the West Side. When discussing the future of the waterfront, Lopate is, I think, right to oppose the idea that "the entire waterfront needs to be protected by a prophylactic green belt." He continues: "That would

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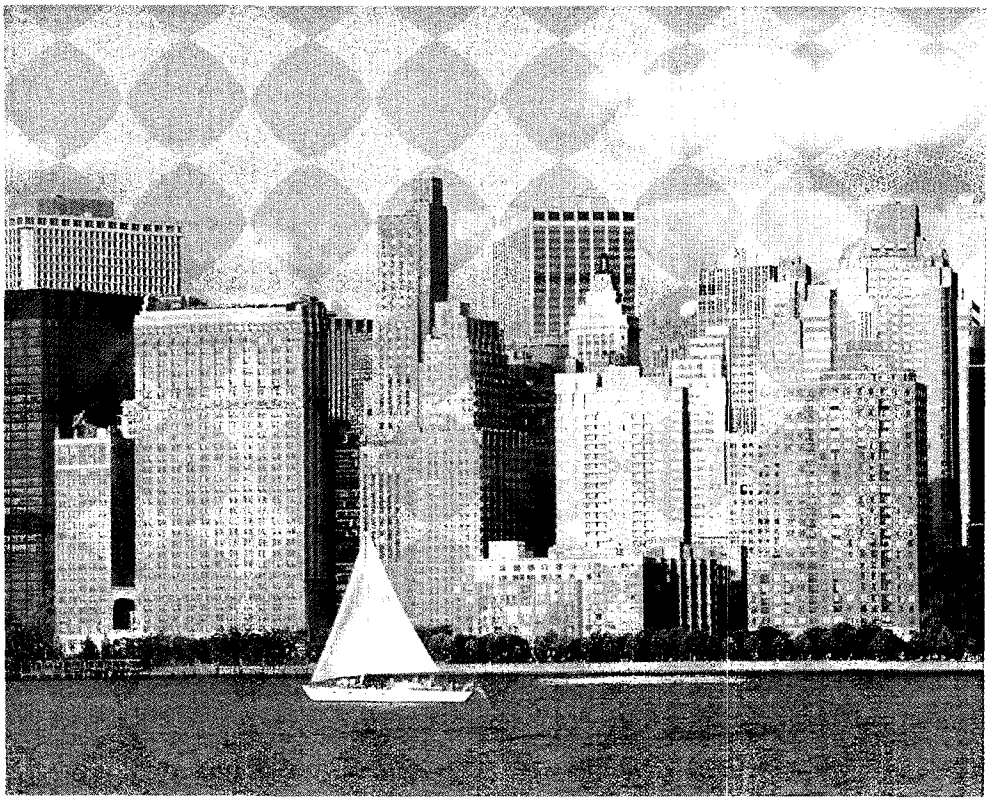


a very monotonous and antiurban strategy. We ought to remember that people do not relocate to New York only to commune with nature: the pleasures of living in a big city derive partly from surrounding oneself with the street's retail enticements. The horror against allowing commerce to invade the new waterfront derives from a fundamental misconception that confuses public access with open public space, untouched by the private sector."

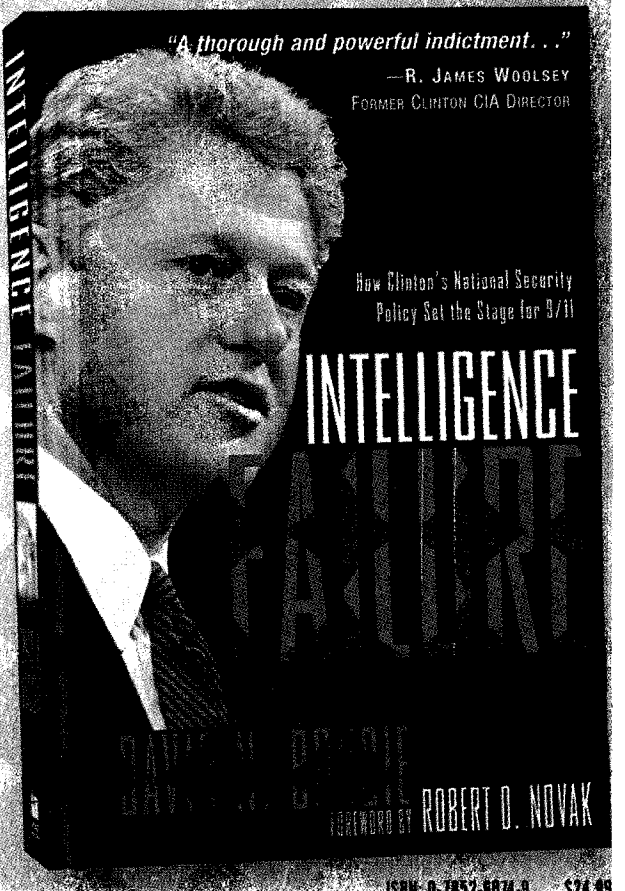
It is easy to imagine a partnership between commercial and public interests resulting in something better than a sterile "greenbelt" or a monolithic football stadium cutting the transportation infrastructure of the city in half. In Chicago, the shores of Lake Michigan are fronted by bicycle and walking paths that link beaches, parks, museums, and commercial and residential developments together, creating a spectacular lakefront used by the entire city. There are no reasons, save Nimbyism (Not in My Back Yard) and Bananaism (Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anything) that the recent improvements on Manhattan's west waterfront cannot serve as the seedbed for a diverse series of cultural institutions, parks, cinemas, shops, and residences. On this front, Lopate's book, if it is read by the right people in the proper spirit, might be very helpful. ♦

"Richard Clarke missed the boat when he blamed President Bush for 9/11. Bossie sets the record straight."

—**Barbara Comstock,** Former Public Affairs Director, U.S. Department of Justice

The American people deserve answers. Eight years before 9/11, on February 26, 1993, Osama Bin Laden and his Al Qaeda terrorist network declared war against the United States with a deadly attack on the World Trade Center. Al Qaeda continued to wage war on the U.S. throughout the Clinton Administration, attacking the Khobar Towers in 1996, two U.S. embassies in East Africa in 1998, and the U.S.S. *Cole* in 2000. Yet the Clinton Administration did virtually nothing to stop them.

Intelligence Failure is the definitive account of Bill Clinton's greatest failure as president.



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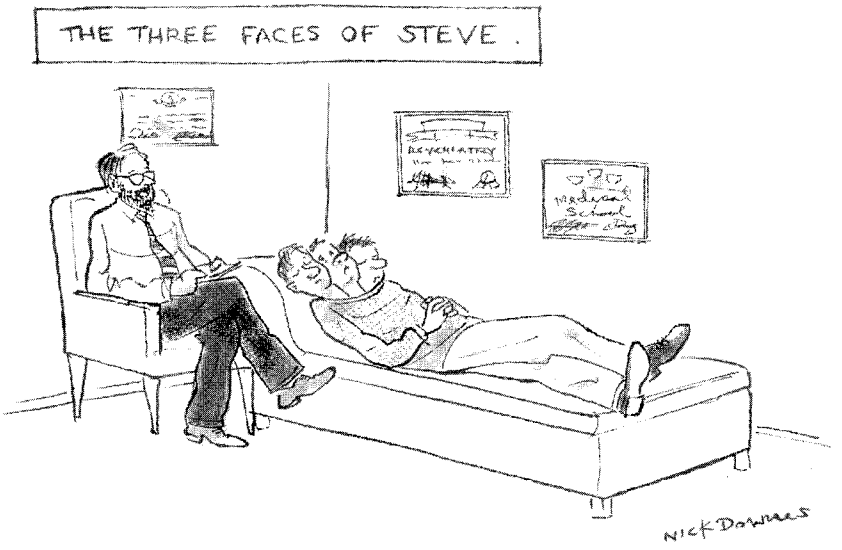

"Steve, I'd like to speak to Doug, now."

Books in Brief

***Inequality in America: What Role for Human Capital Policies?* edited by Benjamin M. Friedman (MIT, 369 pp., $40).** Forty years ago, most experts on inequality believed *poverty* itself was the cause of poverty—the result of discrimination and lack of money. The solution was, therefore, to compensate for discrimination through affirmative action and to transfer money to the poor through welfare programs. After the failure of that disastrous experiment, a new generation began to see poverty as a symptom of complex social dysfunctions. Despite some lingering disputes over racial discrimination, most scholars now believe the way to alleviate poverty is to enhance the productive capacities of individuals.

The economist Alan B. Krueger offers one way to take this, arguing that income differences derive from reduced investment in the poor. *Inequality in America* is a collection of talks at a 2003 public-policy symposium at Harvard, and as Krueger states in the opening essay, "It is clear that returns on education and training are at least as big at the bottom of the income distribution as at the top. . . . This applies to a diverse set of programs, ranging from preschool to Job Corps to conventional K-12 public schools."

There is another way to understand the situation. Associated with Charles Murray and the late Richard J. Herrnstein in their book *The Bell Curve*, it involves the argument that economic success is linked with intelligence, and that since intelligence is largely immutable, there is little that can be done to correct the resulting inequality. Yet a third possibility shares the determinism of the "IQ" school but emphasizes nurturing. Such scholars as James S. Coleman and Paul Barton have argued that two-parent families are the key, and in his famous 1993 article, "Defining Deviancy Down," Daniel Patrick Moynihan compared the difficulty of changing the "parent-pupil" ratio to getting state capitals to move closer to the Canadian border.

Thanks to Nobel Prize-winning economist James J. Heckman, who writes with Pedro Carneiro the core essay in *Inequality in America*, there is now a fourth school of thought. Heckman and Carneiro argue that noncognitive skills—character traits such as patience, reliability, adaptability, persistence—are just as important as intelligence for determining an individual's economic fate. "Manipulating noncognitive skills is more feasible than manipulating cognitive skills," the authors write, "because the prefrontal cortex, which controls emotion and behavior, is malleable until the late teenage years."

To prove their case the authors examine high-school dropouts who obtain a General Equivalency Diploma. They find that dropouts who get such diplomas are smarter than other high-school dropouts, but actually earn less than other high-school dropouts. This, the authors argue, is because GEDs have higher cognitive skills but lower noncognitive skills. "Inadvertently, the GED has become a test that separates bright but nonpersistent and undisciplined dropouts from other dropouts." Unfortunately, Heckman and Carneiro point out, most social policy is focused on cognitive development. Current efforts to improve test scores—primarily, reducing class size and increasing spending—don't work, not only because they do not markedly improve test scores, but because test scores themselves are only weakly linked to earnings.

Instead, Heckman and Carneiro believe that social policy should be more active in attempting to alter noncognitive traits, especially in children from disadvantaged environments who receive poor discipline and little encouragement at home. Accordingly, they see a role for strengthening mentoring programs and stricter enforcement of discipline in schools. Even at later ages, job training and school-retention programs that emphasize good personal habits are the most effective.

For policy experts who have had ample cause for despair in recent decades, Heckman and Carneiro offer an inspiring vision. Let's hope policymakers at all levels hear their call.

—Seth Forman

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Parody

"The origin of little Apple Martin's name may not be so far from the tree. Though Gwyneth Paltrow and Coldplay frontman Chris Martin are not commenting on why they named their newborn daughter after a fruit, she's not the first human Apple in their lives. Marty Diamond, Coldplay's agent at Little Big Man Booking, and his wife named their daughter, who was born last year, Apple Sadie."

—New York Post, May 18, 2004

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CUTS PORN

Andy Rooney finally dies

than Apple Martin, 21. "It's like the whole neighborhood's here, stupid," she said. Among her dormmates at Yale are her youthful neighbor from the Hamptons, Crème Parfay Dre, 20, son of the former rapper Dr Dre, who now holds Yale's Tupac Shakur chair in Alternative Poetry. (The younger Dre, of course, changed his name to Peanut Eminem following the celebrated custody battle in 2019.)

"They are a great bunch of kids," says Brad Pitt, former actor, current president of the National Rifle Association, and father of yet another celebrity Yalie: Ribs-Cooked-So-Good-They-Jess-Fall-Off-The-Bone Pitt, 20. Young Pitt was recently seen with sister Peach and Scottish-born brother MacAroon Pitt (Eli class of '28) showing two of Rosie O'Donnell's six children—son Fudge, 19, and daughter Beer, 18—around the

the weekly Standard

MAY 31, 2004

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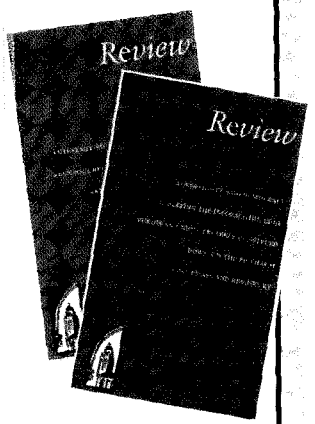

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In the new issue of Policy Review

Israel and the Question of the National State

An unjust anachronism?

The legitimacy of the Zionist enterprise was, we know, contested from the outset. But **when it comes to legitimacy, it is not ideological posturing but history that is the final judge**. The history of Israel's creation, which is still being written, has not yet produced its moral balance sheet—and thus is incommensurate with the experience of nation-states whose security has been established for centuries. Tony Judt does not contest the legitimacy of the French nation on account of the Frankish invasions or that of England by stigmatizing the armed expedition of William the Conqueror. But he haggles over Israel's legitimacy for its supposedly anachronistic character.

—Ran Halévi

Teacher Pay, Teacher Quality

Are teachers overpaid?

While, on the whole, teachers are not underpaid, good teachers, those working in tough circumstances, and those with critical skills are often wildly underpaid. **The flip side is that mediocre teachers are overpaid, sometimes substantially.** In the past few years, the notion of the "$100,000 teacher" has come into vogue. In books like *The Two-Percent Solution* and *The $100,000 Teacher,* authors such as Matthew Miller and Brian Crosby have called for paying good teachers $100,000 or more. Miller and Crosby are right. If we are serious about attracting and retaining the energetic and talented practitioners we want, we need to pay our best, hardest-working teachers that kind of money. Overlooked in these discussions, however, is that a number of teachers already earn that kind of money.

—Frederick M. Hess

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